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# CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS

## ASSEMBLIES

BY  
PERSPEX

THE late summer is their season; at least, if we forget that greatest of all assemblies, the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition which is a traditional part of the jocundity of May. To the critic they are at once a relaxation and a nightmare. What can one do in face of several hundred, or even several score, pictures by different artists? Reel off a string of a chosen dozen? Try to find a trend? Make odious comparisons with the same exhibition of yesterday? Run away to the belated one-man shows? Or fly off and disport on the Lido under the pretence of covering the Biennale which, if it is the international monster of all assemblies at least has a recognisable character and adds to the gaiety of nations?

One temptation is to gamble in futures at that altruistic enterprise of the Royal Society of British Artists, the so-called "Open Assembly", when they stand aside as members and throw open their fine galleries to people who aren't. The result reveals, I would say that, broad and large, there are not quite as good fish in the open sea as those which swim in the protected waters of membership of the societies or the lighted aquariums of the one-man shows.

One other enterprise which gives opportunity to the unknown, but which pays them the most useful compliment of display side by side with the known, is that perennial, the "Artists of Fame and Promise" show at the Leicester Galleries. It is, happily, not too cumbersome. It is always excellently hung—so well that one wonders at times whether an occasional work of genius is returned to the artist because it does not fit the space or colour scheme, but then remembers that this is probably true of every exhibition, and certainly of every mixed exhibition. The chief difficulty at the Leicester show is that the Famous will take all the limelight and so innocently give the Promising a shady deal. There is, for example, a vast canvas by Francis Bacon, one of his recent lines of problem pictures where a gentleman of strangely sinister aspect sits crossed-legged in a Baconian abstraction of space. It is excitingly painted in the thin paint on unprimed canvas with a restricted palette of blues and greens which we associate with this artist. The trouble with Francis Bacon from the contemporary viewpoint is that his pictures have too much subject-matter. No one can help puzzling over what it means, who it is, where it is. Is this menacing gentleman with the gleaming teeth ("all the better to bite you with") a diplomat at Geneva, a business executive, a cobalt bomb scientist? We are back in the dear dead Victorian days when faithless wives kneeled for hardly yielded pardon on the walls of the Royal Academy while the crowd discussed the meaning. Both Francis Bacon



RECLINING NUDE. BY COURBET.

*From the Exhibition at Matthiessen's Gallery.*

PERSPEX's choice for the Picture of the Month.

and Leopold Augustus Egg might be said to be on the same plate despite the lapse of a century. In both instances we are inclined to forget all this century has striven to teach us about pure painterly values.

My concern at the moment, however, is that these pictures at the Leicester Gallery by the names that make art news—the Bacon, an impressive Wyndham Lewis portrait, a landscape by Courbet, a large and noisy Ceri Richards and others—cause us to neglect the artists of promise, who usually and understandably have smaller works. An exception was the "Grimsby Harbour" by Richard Platt, a bold design in good colour, on a fairly large scale which by these very facts takes the eye though the name is not familiar and the style was sufficiently traditional not to startle. But what of the smaller-scale pictures? There was a little painting by Alicia Boyle, whose work so often satisfies me when she does not allow the leprechauns to lead her astray after the Celtic formlessness of Jack Yeats; there was another harbour scene by Hammond Steel; there was a decorative study of three women by somebody Bosanquet: these were truly "of promise" and one rejoiced to find them in rooms where Sickert, Paul Nash and Mark Gertler were showing.

The presence in this exhibition of a landscape by Courbet—an upright one, in this instance, with the massive grey rock form at one side and the heavy-leaved trees shutting out the sky in characteristic fashion—reminds one that there are at the moment in London two important examples of his work. These are showing at the Matthiessen Gallery with the discreet selection of Old Masters which we find there. One of these is also a typical Courbet landscape. The other is a magnificently painted partly draped Nude. The power and monumentality of this large painting (it is 56½ in. by 41½ in.) make it a museum piece and help us to understand that title of Realist which Courbet chose for himself, and his standing

in French art between the classicism of Ingres and the romanticism of Delacroix. The firmness of the modelling gives the solidity we associate with Courbet and is allied to a singular grace which is sometimes lacking in his work.

A more terrifying assembly is the Summer Exhibition at the Redfern Gallery, with no less than five hundred works, exclusive of the coloured lithographs in which this Gallery specialises. Happily they are not all hung simultaneously, but the walls are subtly changed as the incidence of sales or the will of the directors dictate. As an exhibition it is a little more advanced than that at the Leicester Galleries, though the Hogarth Room at that Gallery should leave nothing to be desired by the wildest minds of Montmartre or the British Council. It is rather a question of accent, and at the Redfern the accent is modernist; at the Leicester simply contemporary with a slight feeling of nostalgia and *recherche du temps perdu*.

Actually at the Redfern almost everybody seems to be represented, and the range of prices from 6 gns. to 1,500 gns. should cater for all purses as well as all tastes. For my own taste, the 1,500 item, Christopher Wood's "On the Sands, Treboul", is out of it even were it the lowest priced item, for I confess I have never known wherein lies the fashionable appeal of this artist. Felix Topolski has a large portrait, "The Author of *The Sleep of Prisoners*", an expressionist piece which gets something of the spirit of Christopher Fry's own creative art, though it is hardly a polite portrait. In an exhibition of this kind in these days, the tremendous diversity of styles shows how anarchic art has become in our time. Even individual artists will sometimes have diverse manners, although, on the whole, they are almost too wedded to the formulae by which we know them. Victor Pasmore is on this occasion represented by the pre-abstract phase, the recognisable roses and the Japoniserie of "Chiswick Gardens, Hammersmith". Mark Gertler's rotund "Coster Girl" looked strangely dated and academic, but was a challenging piece of painting amid the prevailing abstraction of the first room in which it is hung. One realised how much water has flowed under bridges since men like Gertler or Charles Ginner were young men in revolt.

If we want to study trends and movements deliberately two other mixed exhibitions have set out to reveal them. One is called "Trends in British Art, 1900-54" at the Guildhall Art Gallery, the other "Parallels in Modern Painting" at Roland, Browse and Delbanco. The Guildhall exhibition may feel to the enthusiast for *avant garde* painting to be taking sides with the traditional, precisely because of the speed with which movements move. In many instances, they move right out of sight in a very short time, and themselves become old-fashioned. For a show of less than one hundred pictures this exhibition reviews the period with sound judgement. No anthology is perfect, and the organisers would be unlikely to claim perfection here, but in many instances we are given opportunity of seeing works so typical of the artist that they have become classics. Sir William Nicholson's "The Hundred Jugs" from the Walker Art Gallery, Brangwyn's "Ponte della Paglia", Gertler's "Portrait of my Mother", Piper's "Rivaux Abbey" from Rochdale, Robert Bevan's "The Cab Yard, Night" from Brighton. A more important James Pryde, Tristram Hiller, and Francis Bacon, among others, would have established the values more certainly, and it might have been wiser to have avoided the half dozen instances where an artist is represented by two works so as to include just that number of omitted artists. But this exhibition serves its avowed purpose.

The stated purpose of the show at Roland, Browse and Delbanco is to show that during recent years different European artists working along independent paths have arrived, if not at the same spot, at least upon the same territory. I must confess that these parallels often escaped me, and I gave myself up to enjoying a number of individual works without worrying whether, say, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska's "Self Portrait" in pastel really was related to Picabia's "Road with Stumped Trees"; or whether Edward le Bas

had other than temporal affinity with the Post-Impressionists. Sufficient that the paintings and drawings were themselves in many instances interesting, and the sub-headings in the catalogue thought-provoking. This was an assembly where the guests never quite assembled; one of those parties where, despite elaborate introductions by a vigorously labelling hostess, the party-goers just stood about without mixing. On the stairs, Lucien Freud's "Kitty" was thus put into the company of "A Man" by Diego de Rivera, at whom she glared balefully as who should say that he wasn't her type; and he wasn't, even though they were the sole partners in "the New Objectivity".

A more comfortable assembly is that of the "Selections from Paris Studios" at the Adams Gallery. It may be that French art circles get along better with themselves than English ones, or that the directors had chosen the company better, or that we were not looking for a *bonhomie* unlikely to be forthcoming. These painters are in most instances concerned with objective appearances rendered with that dashing certitude which marks contemporary French realism. André Masson stands outside this with a typical "Bathers" whose forms are almost dissolved in the circumambient light and water, but even he has a fairly solid "Bird of Prey" which settles into the limits of the style. Bernard Buffet's "The Owl" equally indicates a shift of emphasis towards realism of vision in an artist who has for long hovered on the verges of abstraction. André Minaux' "Woman with a Rake" is a typical picture, or Richard Bellias's "The Open Window". These large, somewhat unobtrusive, paintings give you the feeling that their creators know what they want and are capable of getting it. They are visual and sensual rather than intellectual, given to hot colours, and over-bold design. They are positive: if you do not like them, you hate them. Personally, I enjoyed most the least typical of them, "The Port, Audierne" by Claude Venard.

Meantime, Tooth's have brought together a modest three artists from Italy, names new to many of us and all in very different manners good. Nino Caffè, in a series of tiny panels, playfully observes the ways of monks and nuns in their more worldly relationships with the universe about them. They go to a tiny monastic circus and encourage dogs to jump through hoops, they picnic on lonely beaches, are made the sport of the wind as laundry on a line or draperies on portly forms are caught in it. Always they are human beneath the black cassocks, and one revels in their air of happy-go-lucky piety. Both other men are finer painters: Antero Piletti with his decorative peasant figures, slit-eyed and heavy-lipped on their golden panels; Renzo Vespignani, painter of ports and boats caught between the silver light of the sky and that of the water. This is all painting which owes nothing to the School of Paris and is the more welcome for the fact, for these men see out of their own eyes worlds of their own imagination.

May we end with a word on assemblies of quite another sort, assemblies as the subject of pictures. These are the speciality of Terence Cuneo, who has an exhibition of them at the R.W.S. Gallery headed by "The Coronation Ceremony, Westminster Abbey", which the County Lieutenants have just presented to Her Majesty the Queen. The enthusiasts for masterpieces which consist of one coloured herring on a plate out of drawing always regard this sort of picture as beneath contempt, but among the hundred pictures in Mr. Cuneo's exhibition there are some which indicate that he could even paint the herring if he wished. The virtuosity of "The Underwriting Room at Lloyds"; the workshop studies of heavy industry; the "Visit of the Queen to Lloyds"; "the Coronation Luncheon in the Guildhall": all this is brilliant reportage. It must be looked at alongside his African paintings at Marrakech, where he is at his most simple and direct. The tremendous business of making into good paintings these large ceremonial pictures must pose problems which might be discipline for those who tread rarer heights of art. Mr. Cuneo, I suspect, is satisfied with his own modest achievement.



# CENTENARY of THE ROYAL SCOTTISH MUSEUM

THIS summer the Royal Scottish Museum is celebrating its centenary, and it is perhaps appropriate to record briefly its achievements in the collecting of works of art over the hundred years. Broadly, the Museum's Department of Art, Archaeology and Ethnology is a Scottish equivalent of the Victoria and Albert Museum, in that its purpose is primarily educational. Contrary to a belief common among visitors and correspondents, its concern is not principally with Scottish arts and crafts. The collections are general, and representative not only of Europe but also of the East and of primitive peoples. Paintings and drawings, however, are not included in its scope.

The collection of medieval European art has already been described in *APOLLO* (January, 1953). Perhaps its strongest feature is a small group of ivories of high quality, ranging from a fine oliphant of the Xth-XIIth centuries to French work of the XIVth. The best of the wood-carvings are a southern French Madonna and Child of the late XIIIth century and two large relief groups which suggest the hand of Tilman Riemenschneider. Among the most notable pieces of arms and armour are the Sword of Battle Abbey, the rare Pembroke Helm, formerly in Hereford Cathedral, and an exceptionally good hauberk of chain mail known as the Sinigaglia hauberk, all three of which came to the Museum in 1905, when the Noel Paton collection was purchased by public subscription.

Ceramics, glass and metalwork have been systematically built up during the past twenty-five years, and the fairly representative series now on view is marked by some notable pieces. In 1953, Lady Binning bequeathed some superlative English porcelain. It includes part of a tea-service made in 1774 by Richard Champion for the wife of Edmund Burke. Other Bristol wares are sets of "The Elements" and "The Seasons."

Among Continental wares is some notable Italian maiolica: lusted Gubbio ware by Giorgio Andreoli and a fine set of five plates painted by Nicola Pellipario. In the field of glass, the Hunter Bequest of 1936 is especially strong in sweetmeat and champagne glasses; and in 1952 a rare "Amen" glass was added to the small Jacobite group on view. One of two Syrian mosque lamps may be dated, by the inscription, to the period 1342-5. As regards silver, much of the collection of Scottish work, which is the most complete in any museum, has already been described in *APOLLO*; but among recent acquisitions are a very rare spherical covered cream ewer of 1730, by William Aytoun of Edinburgh, given by Sir Eric Miller through the National Art-Collections Fund, and an Edinburgh tankard of baluster form by Colin McKenzie, of date 1709, purchased with the aid of the same Fund.

Within the past year or two the group of English silver has been strengthened by a notable gilt chalice and paten of 1527, by a beautiful little octagonal teapot and stand, the teapot of 1724, with the original London maker's mark overstruck by Jonathan French of Newcastle, and

by the munificent bequest of Sir Francis Vernon Thomson of about forty pieces, among them a handsome punch-bowl of 1741, by Thomas Farrer. The most notable recent addition in foreign silver is the Lennoxlove Toilet Service, bought with the help of generous contributions from the Pilgrim Trust and the National Art-Collections Fund.

The textile collection contains several notable things, chief among them perhaps being the embroidered curtain and valances reputed to have come from the bed of Mary Queen of Scots at Lochleven Castle, and two *petit-point* panels of about 1580, from Murthly Castle. A range of fabrics recovered from burying-grounds in Egypt, dating from the IIIrd to the IXth century, includes a complete tunic with decoration tapestry woven in purple wool, while there is a good series of Pre-Conquest Peruvian textiles from the coastal region. At the other end of the time scale, the group of Scottish XIXth-century needlework is important of its kind.

There is a considerable collection of Oriental art. To the specialist, its most important feature is the unique series of prehistoric Japanese pottery, stone implements and metal objects obtained from shell-mounds and dolmens and given to the Museum by Dr. Neil Gordon Munro. The Chinese lacquer has been described in "Apollo Miscellany" (1951). Among several articles of Chinese furniture is an exceptionally good lacquer throne dating from about 1700. Indian material is limited, but there are some good examples of Gandhara sculpture.

The Department of Art embraces also archaeology. In the small group of Assyrian and Babylonian pieces there are two of high importance: a superb carved slab of the IXth century B.C. from Nimrud with figures of Ashur-Nasir-Pal II and an attendant, and a portion of another slab from Nimrud exquisitely carved with horses' heads and human figures. The Egyptian collection is much more extensive. Among the Rhind antiquities came such notable acquisitions as the Bi-lingual Papyri, the Poem on the King's War Chariot and the toilet-casket of Amenophis II. Other outstanding Egyptian pieces are a relief of Amenophis I, a quartzite head of Tut-ankh-amun and an exquisite little goldfish from Harageh, and it should be emphasised that there are many fine things as yet unpublished.

As to the ethnological collections, they are of special importance and are being developed with the emphasis on æsthetic appeal. As an experiment in this direction, five years ago a travelling exhibition illustrating the arts of the South Seas was organised jointly by the Museum and by the Scottish Committee of the Arts Council. The North American material, much of it acquired through the generosity of the old Hudson's Bay Company, has been described as in some respects the finest in Britain. It includes a 37-foot totem pole of high quality, from Angyada, British Columbia.

I. F.



Slab from Nimrud, IXth Century B.C., carved in relief with figures of Ashur-Nasir-Pal II and attendant.



Fig. 1. Madame Récamier by L. David. Louvre.

## THE GRECIAN COUCH

BY GEOFFREY WILLS

THE art of ancient Greece began to be seriously studied in Europe in the 1750's. In the next decade, the publication of the *Antiquities of Athens*, by Nicholas Revett and James (Athenian) Stuart was appreciated with a growing interest in this country and had some effect on the current styles of architecture and decoration. However, in these fields the work of Robert and James Adam prevailed over all; it was to the culture of the western Mediterranean, to Rome, and to Italy in general, that the Scots brothers owed their principal inspiration.

The Greek influence in the design of furniture and interiors of houses in England was not noticeably apparent until the beginning of the XIXth century; by which date the Adams had died and Sir John Soane, who interpreted the Greek originals in his own way, had taken their place as the premier architect. While Soane had little apparent influence on the design of furniture, his near-contemporary, Thomas Hope, was a considerable force in this direction. He published his *Household Furniture and Decoration* in 1807 and is familiarly known as "Hope of Deepdene," from the name of his house at Dorking, Surrey. He was a man who had travelled widely and was strongly influenced by the culture of the eastern Mediterranean. Not only had he studied the numerous ancient monuments where they stood, but he was also strongly affected by the contemporary French versions of those same styles.

Shortly after the publication of this book, its influence began to be discernible. In spite of the fact that the author was described at the time, with veiled contempt, as a man

who wrote with some endeavour about house furniture and decoration, and was called by Sydney Smith "The man of chairs and tables, the gentleman of sofas," his work has a symmetry that is not unattractive, but is marred by a crude bulkiness. This wealthy amateur, man of culture and decorator, can be said to have inspired the design of a great amount of furniture by his personal taste and by his example in furnishing his own mansion with examples of it.

The Grecian couch or, rather, the French version of it, is probably best remembered from its appearance in Louis David's famous painting in the Louvre of Madame Récamier (Fig. 1).

Jeanne-Françoise Bernard was born at Lyons in 1777 and at the age of 16 married Jacques Récamier, who was 26 years her senior. The marriage was successful, the husband, a banker, prospered and became a very wealthy man. Madame Récamier was a noted beauty with a lovely home, and she was a great and respected figure in Parisian society until her death in 1849.

A description of the bed of this very elegant lady—in what was, at the time, the latest and most fashionable style—was noted by an English visitor to her house in the *Chaussée d'Antin*:

Her bed is reckoned the most beautiful in Paris—it, too, is of mahogany enriched with ormolu and bronze, and raised upon two steps of the same wood. Over the whole bed was thrown a great coverlid or veil of fine plain muslin, with rows of narrow gold lace at each end, and the muslin embroidered as a border. The curtains were

## THE GRECIAN COUCH

Fig. II. English Couch of painted beechwood. *Circa 1815.*  
(Mrs. Esmé Anderson.)

muslin, trimmed and worked like the coverlid suspended from a sort of carved *couronne de roses*, and tucked up in drapery upon the wall, against which the bed stood. At the foot of the bed stood a fine Grecian lamp of ormolu [gilded bronze], with a little figure of the same metal bending over it; and at the head of the bed another stand, upon which was placed a large ornamented flower-pot, containing a large artificial rose tree, the branches of which must nod very near her nose in bed.

Couches in the simple Greek style were made in England in the early years of the XIXth century. They were usually of painted beechwood, black with gold lines; occasionally of polished mahogany (Fig. II). As the years passed, the styles introduced by Soane and Hope slowly became more popular and finally achieved a widespread recognition on the outbreak of the Civil War in Greece in 1821.

Most of the nations in Europe were keenly engaged in following the valiant struggle of the Greek nation in its war of liberation against the Turks. It was the war into which the poet Lord Byron threw his sympathies and his fortune, and in which he finally lost his life at Missolonghi.

In spite of the highly unfavourable opinion he had quickly formed from a short personal contact with members of the insurgent army (not usually either the best or the most representative members of any race), Byron had written:

Maid of Athens, ere we part,  
Give, oh, give me back my heart!  
Or, since that has left my breast,  
Keep it now, and take the rest!

The coy lines appealed to the fancy of all who watched the conflict from afar. Loans, funds and committees were started and the many who had thought of the Mediterranean country only as an historic fact dealt with in their schooldays, and not as a collection of human beings fighting for their freedom, became interested. The artistic styles of ancient Greece, and the sentiments of the modern, became fashionable, and the former were copied and adapted in the design of dress, furniture and architecture throughout England.

In 1826 appeared George Smith's *Cabinetmakers' and Upholsterers' Guide*, which encouraged the vogue for Hellenic motifs with designs for furniture with what the author called Grecian massiveness. Although in architecture the Greek lines remained comparatively untouched, this was not so in the case of furniture. With widespread



popularity the designs became duly anglicised and after a very short time their Greek or Franco-Greek origins had disappeared for ever: the simplicity of line became lost in a welter of heavy carving, and the delicate day-bed of Madame Récamier was unrecognisable.

Fig. III shows a design for a Grecian sofa published in the 1830's. The editorial comment accompanying it, and the design for a nearly similar sofa, are worth noting:

The couches we consider as handsome articles. The four feet being all straight, are equally carved and ornamented. The carved foliage, embracing the frame of the head, and the hand-rail at the back, exhibits a happy specimen of the application of ornament, in such a manner as to make it appear as if it arose out of the construction of the article. . . .

Perhaps as a result of the enthusiasm with which these particular designs were presented, they were made in sufficiently large quantities for most people to remember one or more, most often upholstered in a shiny black material, in home, hotel or boarding-house.

The couch in Fig. IV is a model that is just under 3 feet in length. It shows the Grecian style as it was interpreted in 1851, the year in which it is known that this model was made. With it, the metamorphosis is complete: the simple Hellenic lines have almost completely disappeared, and very few people would recognise in such a piece of furniture the plain couch of Madame Récamier from which sprang its basic design.

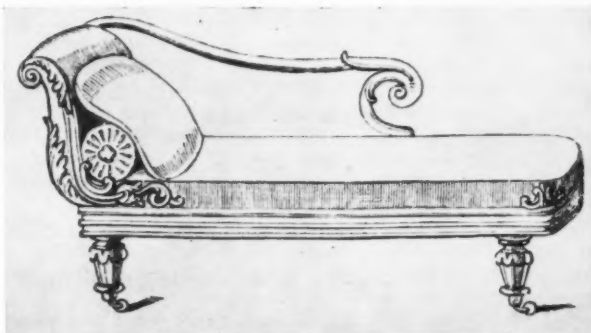


Fig. III. Design for Grecian Sofa published in the 1830's.



Fig. IV. Model of a Grecian Couch made in 1851.  
(Victoria and Albert Museum.)



# ORNAMENTAL LEATHER WORK OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY JONATHAN LEE



Fig. 1. When the Victorian leather workers strove for originality some of their efforts, though most naturalistic and ingenious, were overcrowded and fussy.

THE desire to make one material imitate the appearance of another is an old human trait. Sometimes fashion is responsible, as with flowers made from sea shells or feathers; at other times it is escapism, romanticism or nostalgia, as with electric candles, and with radiators designed to look like glowing coals. The most common reason for the deception is and always has been the desire to obtain an expensive appearance at low cost. Under this heading come many varieties of plating, wood graining, wood grained and marbled papers and plastic sheets, and grained leather cloths and papers.

Leather itself must be among the oldest substances used by man for decorative purposes. Its painting, gilding and tooling was a flourishing craft in mediæval Europe. Leather wall hangings were introduced to Spain by the Arabs, and Cordova work gained a great reputation. In the XVIIth century, decorative embossed leather *cuir bouilli* for walls, chairs, caskets, books, etc., was a prosperous industry in all the western European continental countries. In Italy, particularly, the painting and gilding of leather was magnificent. In England, although leather was used for chair coverings at an early date, the majority of decoratively treated leather was imported until near the end of the XVIIth century. In the XVIIIth century, certain small objects of decorative leather work in the style of wood carving were executed as a hobby by ladies of fashion.

In the XIXth century, this hobby developed into an industry, a comparatively small one, the object of which was stated to be the "effect of wood carving at a considerable diminution of expense." Even when developed as an industry, the process, as operated by some of the makers, was more a hand than a machine one. The quality varies

enormously, but in the best examples both design and workmanship merit the attention of discriminating collectors of Victoriana.

The objects most commonly formed by this process were small mirror and picture frames, panels, swags of fruit and flowers, floral compositions, friezes for furniture and cornices for rooms. Although some of the designs were original, the majority were translations of the work of Grinling Gibbons or modelling based on the Italian *cinqe cento*. Long frieze or cornice strips were the most mechanical and usually the least interesting effects.

The leather, generally tanned sheep skins, was moistened, laid on the embossed ornamental moulds, pressed by small wooden tools or, in some instances, hydraulic presses, stamped in parts to give textured effect and pierced by cutters to show fretted openings and outlines. When dry, the design was often embellished further by the application of various colouring matter, picked out with silver leaf, varnished to make it gold. The back of the leather was coated with a composition which hardened the leather and prevented subsidence of the embossing.

The most interesting form of this work and that which most closely resembled wood carving, was composed of a large number of small pieces of leather, embossed or hand curled and joined together and left free from colouring. Sometimes it was varnished, at other times it was left *au naturel* and protected by glass. Some of the last named pieces have to be examined closely to distinguish them from wood.

M. Dulud of Paris was an early XIXth century protagonist of this process, which he commenced about 1837. In the 1840's, Leake & Co. and Esquilant & Co. were



Fig. II. W. E. Sanders, who showed this floral spray and frame at the 1862 Exhibition, was the outstanding designer and executant of ornamental leather work.

*Engraving from the 1862 Art Journal Catalogue.*

producing very similar work in London. Both showed examples of their work at the 1851 Exhibition; these included Grinling Gibbons flower and fruit frames and swags. In these, each flower petal and leaf was pressed and cut separately and the whole composition built up like sprays of artificial flowers with an adhesive and with leather covered wire. The 1851 Art Journal Catalogue says of Esquilant's exhibits: "They are made of the stoutest material and may be readily mistaken for wood-carvings; hence their peculiar applicability for the internal decoration of houses and for the saloons of steam ships, for which it is perhaps more especially adapted as less liable to split or break off than wood."

When some of these manufacturers tried to be original, their efforts were apt to be rather naïve and fussy, but some, though examples of misplaced ingenuity, have now a certain period quaintness, such as the floral basket, Fig. I, which was probably made by Leake. The twisted handle, like the flowers, ivy leaves and ferns, are all of leather; the latter are displayed on a blue fabric-covered background.

Both as a designer and as executant, W. E. Sanders of Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, who exhibited at the 1862 Exhibition, was undoubtedly in a class by himself. The Art Journal Catalogue says of his exhibits: "They are specimens of leather carving; the leather—tanned sheep skin—is cut by a pen knife, and a few small tools. It is difficult by engraving to convey an idea of the elegance of these objects." This is no exaggeration.



Fig. III. An actual example of Sanders' work shown at the 1862 Exhibition—in its original glazed case. An example of a congruous and finely scaled design, brilliantly executed.

Fig. II is an engraving of a floral spray and frame by Sanders, taken from the 1862 Catalogue. The composition shown in Fig. III was also illustrated in the same catalogue, but the photograph is of the actual exhibit, which is still in its original glazed frame. This frame, simply and slimly moulded with cross-grained walnut and lined with red velvet, now somewhat faded, could easily be mistaken for an example of work of the Queen Anne period. The contents, too, are of a standard of design not usually associated with the Victorian era, for the group of crustaceans and their frame, decorated with starfish, various shells and feathery seaweed, form a remarkably homogeneous composition and one in which the scale is so good and the workmanship so fine that the richness of the ornament never degenerates into vulgarity. Practically the whole of the composition appears to be hand work and even the fine strands of seaweed, which form the background of the frame, are all applied separately. Where some solidity is required, as in the bodies of the crabs, lobsters and some of the shells, the models are built up with a core of compressed tissue or similar paper, covered with leather and they feel like soft suede to the touch.

The excellence of the simulation of wood carving by this example of Victorian leather modelling can be gauged from the fact that it was bought by its present owner, at the sale of the Lamplugh Collection, under the misapprehension that it was a wood carving. It certainly appeared to be such and was so described in the sale catalogue. Its true composition was only discovered when it was removed from the outer glazed frame for replacement of a shell which had dropped off. It would be interesting to know if the companion example, Fig. II, still exists.

# MARKS AND MOULD NUMBERS on POTTERY

BY REGINALD G. HAGGAR

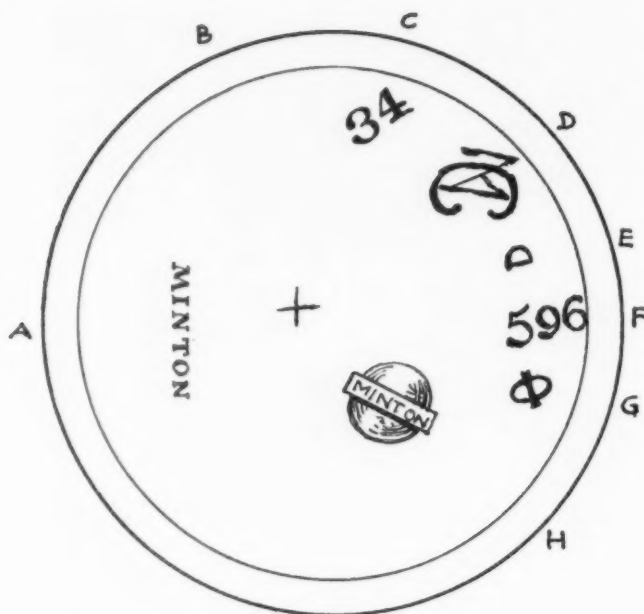


Fig. I. Base of transfer-printed Earthenware Bottle. Minton, 1871, actual size. All marks impressed unless otherwise stated. A, factory mark. B, painted in purple blue, print repairer's mark. C, F, mould numbers, shape and handle. D, year mark for 1871 (initials of Colin Minton Campbell). E, G, workmen's marks, maker and handler. H, factory mark, transfer-printed in black.

POTTERY marks may be classified into five categories: (1) incised marks made with a tool, or painted marks applied with a brush, indicating either manufacturer, workman, or recipient; (2) impressed, transfer-printed, or painted marks, used by factories to prevent imposition, and for advertisement; (3) workmen's marks intended for the detection of faulty work, or as aids in settling wages, etc. (these may indicate maker, repairer, or decorator); (4) marks to identify year of manufacture; and (5) mould or pattern numbers used to enable customers to re-order goods, or for convenience in factory production. Marks were at first applied sparingly. Indeed, on early wares they rarely occur except on special presentation pieces. During the second half of the XIXth century factory marks, mould numbers, and workmen's marks were sometimes applied indiscriminately. Fig. I, which shows no fewer than eight, is an example of the over-application of marks; not more than three were really necessary.

Incised marks, often drawn with a wooden tool in bold cursive handwriting, are common, and some, like the "P:V" mark which occurs on finely modelled figures of Shakespeare (adapted from the well-known William Kent-Peter Scheemaker's statue in Westminster Abbey) and Milton have given rise to wild conjecture and speculation. I hope to return to this particular mark in a later issue of APOLLO. Some incised marks, such as that of Voyez, are clearly modeller's signatures. Others, like "John Toft," which occurs on a salt-glazed teapot, probably indicate the manufacturer. Some painted inscriptions give not only the name of the manufacturer but also that of the recipient. A notable instance of this is the enamelled salt-glazed jug in Hanley Museum and Art Gallery, decorated with a portrait inscribed "J. Walter, de Checkley" and "To every Creature was a Friend 1768" and underneath a full inscription which reads—

"To my worthy Friend, John Walter of Checkley, this Pitcher is presented, as a Testimony whereby I wou'd shew, how much I respect & hon' him, on ac' of that skill, which (with great Pains & too moderate Profit) he hath so successfully employ'd for the Good of the Publick in general & in particular of his affectionate Friend. J. Middleton."

The Rev. J. Middleton, B.A. (1714-1802), was curate of Hanley and partner with Warner Edwards (died 1759) in a potworks in Shelton. Other painted marks, like the

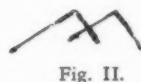


Fig. II.



Fig. III.



Fig. IV.

reversed "L's", or conventional mountains which occur in the field of decoration on porcelain attributed to Longton Hall (Fig. II), or the curious roughly painted grid (Fig. III) which occurs in blue under a figure of a boy-sweep believed to have been adapted by John Voyez from a model by Paul Louis Cyfflé (1724-1806), are cryptic and not easily explained.

Factory marks, whether impressed, printed, or painted, are usually distinctive in character, and generally applied in such a way as to make their meaning clear. Josiah Wedgwood, F.R.S., was the first potter to make regular use of factory marks. A full list of the marks used by the firm of Wedgwood is given in *Wedgwood* by John Meredith Graham II and Hensleigh Cecil Wedgwood (New York: 1948). Other potters, including the Ralph Woods, followed Wedgwood's example, although they did not use marks either so frequently or so consistently as their mentor. Nor are all factory marks easy to explain. The impressed mark "WOOD", for instance, has not been recorded, and may stand for Ephraim Wood, an important figure-maker and cousin of Enoch Wood, rather than for one of the better-known figure-makers of the Wood family. The haphazard use of marks by the Ralph Woods and Enoch Wood is something of a mystery. Why did the Woods mark some pieces (not always their best) and not others? One can only speculate why a really important and finely modelled piece, such as the "Nessus and Deianeira" in Capt. E. Bruce George's collection, ascribed by Stanley W. Fisher to Enoch Wood, should be unmarked, whereas a comparatively mediocre model like the bust of the Emperor of Russia should be fully inscribed. Again, other marks give no clue as to the manufacturer's name. The printed mark (Fig. V) is a typical example. This was the factory mark of Hicks & Meigh, later Hicks, Meigh & Johnson of Shelton (fl. 1810-1835). This mark, with the addition of the word "REAL" above, was adopted when the engravings passed into the hands of Ridgway, Morley, Weir & Co. Many similar problems of identification might be given.

Workmen's marks have long been used in the pottery industry and hardly need discussion, although they are of considerable interest in a critical examination of the



## MARKS AND MOULD NUMBERS ON POTTERY

products of individual factories. Stanley W. Fisher discussed workmen's marks informatively in *APOLLO ANNUAL*, 1948.

Year marks were employed by several factories in the XIXth century, notably Minton's and Wedgwoods. A mark impressed on bone china (and sometimes on earthenware) was used by Minton's from 1842 onwards to distinguish the products of each year. Some of the marks used for this purpose were not suitable and are frequently illegible. Minton's year marks for 1842, 1858, 1862, and 1881 are



Fig. V.

illustrated (Fig. IV). Wedgwood's introduced a system of dating in 1860 consisting of three capital letters, the first indicating the month, the second the potter who made the piece, and the third the year. The year letters started with O in 1860 and finished with Z in 1871, recommenced with A in 1872 and then went through two complete cycles of the alphabet, finishing with Z in 1923. This system was, however, rather unsatisfactory, and was abandoned for a better one, consisting of a figure indicating the month, a letter as a workman's mark, and two figures giving the actual year. Thus the mark "2 x 46" would indicate that the ware was made by X in February 1946.

Mould numbers or pattern numbers were first introduced in the second half of the XVIIIth century, when expanding trade imposed unprecedented demands upon factory organisation. The Ralph Woods were among the first to adopt the system, probably for internal factory use rather than for ordering goods. The date when they first came into

use is not known, but we may assume that the system of numbering moulds did not arise until an accumulation of models, and perhaps the production of several variants in size and treatment, made it imperative. The sequence of mould numbers therefore offers only an approximate guide to chronology. Of course popular models continued in production over a period of perhaps twenty or thirty years or more. Thus several Ralph Wood models are known in early glaze colour treatment, undecorated, and decorated with enamel colours. The well-known model of "Hudibras," for example, occurs in the Elizabeth Marianne Wood Collection, Hanley Museum and Art Gallery, in both glaze and enamel colourings. Captain and Mrs. E. Bruce George possess two Ralph Wood figures which show interesting and rather perverse use of mould numbers (Fig. VI). The two figures of "Venus" and "Bacchus," 8 inches high, and decorated in brown, green, mauve, red, and flesh tints with enamel colours, are impressed with mould number "56." The list of mould numbers given by Frank Falkner in *The Wood Family of Burslem* contains a figure of "Juno" (perhaps an error for "Venus") as No. 56, and "Bacchus" as No. 57. Both were 8 in. high. It would seem from this that when figures were made up in pairs they were sometimes both given one mould number, whereas separate numbers were impressed on items ordered individually. One wonders if other instances of this unusual use of numbers have been recorded. The "Admiral Van Tromp," a typical Ralph Wood model, is of undecorated earthenware with a "blued" glaze, and is 14½ in. high (Fig. VII). It is impressed with mould number "38," which is not recorded in Falkner's list. Indeed, there is a gap between No. 37, also a "Van Tromp" (but a much smaller version) and No. 42, which is "Hudibras." The modelling of the "Van Tromp" is uncommonly good, and has much in common with this fine equestrian model. The lofty base upon which it is mounted is characteristic of Ralph Wood's productions.

The use of mould numbers on several pieces does not necessarily mean that each piece will be alike. The tooling by the repairer is sufficient to account for subtle differences, while models involving assembly of parts from more than one set of moulds often show considerable variations. Models of Toby Fillpot bearing the mould number "51" may be cited in this connection. Hanley Museum possesses two Toby jugs impressed with this number, one of which has a clay pipe at the side of Toby's right leg, the other with the pipe between his feet.



Fig. VI. "Venus" and "Bacchus." Staffordshire figures by Ralph Wood. Mould number 56 impressed. Bacchus: Brown line on plinth. Mound and tree stump, light brown with light green grape leaves, flowers brownish colour and mauve. Flesh tints good. Drapery dark and light pinky-mauve, with red strap and lining. Venus: Brown line on plinth. Base similar in colour to Bacchus hair, with light green bandeau. Robe, mauve with dark spots and dots, lined with green.

Collection of Captain and Mrs. Bruce George, Cheltenham.



Fig. VII. "Admiral Van Tromp" Ralph Wood figure. Mould number 38. Undecorated earthenware with blued glaze. (Not recorded.)

Collection of Captain and Mrs. Bruce George, Cheltenham.



Fig. I. A Farmyard Scene. By courtesy of Messrs. Knoedler.

## James Ward, R.A., and Rural England

BY G. E. FUSSELL

JAMES WARD certainly chose the proper period to be born to become the man of his particular talents.

The year was 1769, the year of the founding of the Royal Academy, and two years after Arthur Young had begun the farming tours that were to bring the agricultural interest to the forefront of men's minds.

The ninety years of Ward's long life were the best part of the century that saw the hey-day of England's commercial and agricultural greatness and the foundation of modern England. Ward's life was no less intensive than the age in which he lived. Born in the purlieus of Dowgate, almost beside the great dunghill on the banks of the river, his was no halcyon childhood. The savage life of such a neighbourhood in the late XVIIIth century is almost incredible to modern minds. Drink and licence, or the consolations of a hell-fire religion, were the only recreations, and Ward's father chose the first. He was a drunken fruit salesman, superstitious to the verge of mania—as indeed were so many people at that time—who died possibly in delirium tremens brought on by an attempt at too sudden reform following an hallucination of being haunted by the ghost of his recently deceased and pious brother.

Children reared amongst influences of this kind are often highly nervous and super-sensitive, inclined to live a life of fantasy. Ward was no exception, but his reaction was to the other extreme, and it was emphasised by the appalling circumstances of his childhood, circumstances that were not mitigated by the self-denial and devotion of an almost saintly mother.

Individual careers are frequently determined by personal circumstances and incidents, and there was reason to suppose that a child born into the family of the soddensot of a fruit salesman, and in the environment

of his birthplace, would not rise out of the rut of commonplace employment and usefulness. Under the pretext of keeping him off the streets, James' parents put him to work at an unconscionably early age even for that day. At the age of five he filled cider bottles for his father's employer; with a characteristic perverted sense of humour, the adult workers taught the child bawdy songs that he learned to pipe in his childish treble. At the age of six years he was promoted to bottle washer. This cider business gave him an unforgettable experience. Once James went into Kent on a delivery dray, and there at Pratt's Bottom he had his first glimpse of country life—a blacksmith's shop, and village green with its grazing sheep, pigs and geese—the country life that was to play so large a part in his success as an engraver and painter.

While James was occupied in this fashion, his elder brother, William Ward, was enjoying the advantages of education at the Merchant Taylors' School which he attended for five years. James had a few weeks only at the same school. Perhaps by virtue of this education William became an engraver apprentice to James Raphael Smith, and when he was twelve years old James joined his brother. In those days the duties of an apprentice were for a large part mere drudgery, often those of a scullion, with floors to be swept, plates cleansed, parcels packed, and so on, and it was unendurable to one who had already conceived an idea of his own outstanding ability, and only became tolerable when he transferred his term of apprenticeship from Smith to his brother William.

At length William Ward was able to move the family out into the country at Kensal Rise, and here George Morland courted their sister Anne and William became betrothed to Morland's sister. James was not only



thrown into personal contact with rustic scenes, but his taste for this kind of subject was undoubtedly influenced by Morland, for whom he had formed a great and justified admiration. It changed to a sour dislike when Morland—James being out of his time with his brother—refused to accept him as a pupil for two or three years. James, as was inevitable in one of his temper, believed that Morland was afraid of his competition, but the truth is more likely to have been that they were temperamental incompatibles. Morland, a rollicking rake, would have little sympathy with the puritan, James Ward.

This refusal put James on his mettle, and to qualify himself he went to Brooks, the anatomist of Blenheim Street, spending all his leisure dissecting bodies—human, beast and bird. Hardly yet twenty, this indomitable character was earning a living by engraving and studying anatomy in his spare time. Such determination is bound to succeed, but the temper that so often accompanies it invites rebuffs. These two occupations were not enough for Ward's soaring ambition; he wanted to be a student of painting and drawing at the new Academy Schools as well. The entry picture which James Ward submitted with his application was thought good enough to qualify him for acceptance, but because the school was full he could not commence his studies at once and he was infuriated that he would have to wait for six months. Next he sent the design and another drawing to the Society of Artists in 1790, but again was not acclaimed with all the plaudits he thought his due meed, and decided to abandon all idea of academic instruction. Already he had done some fine mezzotints, though so young, and his perseverance knew no bounds. Conscious, too conscious, of his own powers, and quite unaware of his limitations, he dispensed with teachers, but he developed so well under the severe system of personal endeavour that his early works bear no obvious sign of youth and inexperience.

Those delightful pictures, "Rustic Felicity" and "Outside a Country Alehouse," belong to this time, being shown in 1791, but the "Haymakers," painted then, was not published till 1793. In that year, too, a drawing book was published by Simpson in which half the designs were drawn by James Ward and half by Morland.

The choice of subjects for the book was influenced by the admired Morland, and was singularly appropriate to the time. All through the XVIIIth century the interest of the great landowners in the development of their estates had been leading to improved farming throughout the country, and the continually increasing public interest provided for painters of rural scenes and bucolic characters a ready market, and an equally ready access to the patronage of the great landowners. Even if James Ward had not been influenced by his relation to Morland, his own fascination in country scenes, kindled in his childhood at Pratt's Bottom, surely must have led Ward to choose this subject, in which his talents were seen at their best.

Though great attention was given to the better farming of arable land at this time, animal breeding appealed as strongly to the landowners; great over-sized oxen, sheep and pigs were bred and reared, and no doubt appropriately prodded by the farmers at the agricultural shows organised by Coke of Norfolk at Holkham, the Duke of Bedford at Woburn, and John Christian Curwen at Workington, Cumberland.

Ward therefore struck a successful opening chord with his "Staffordshire Cow" and "Staffordshire Bull" that were exhibited with his "Bull-baiting" at the Royal Academy of 1797. On the last he was complimented by the President, Benjamin West. His predilection for animals was demonstrated once again in the following year with the "Lion and Tiger fighting."

In 1797 James and William Ward entered into a



Fig. II. James Ward  
By courtesy of the British Museum.

business partnership, but they were temperamentally incompatible and the partnership did not flourish. Meanwhile he had made a socially successful marriage to a very beautiful woman, the daughter of his Uncle William, but not the best partner for such a man. She was a familiar figure at Almack's, that most exclusive club, and was a reigning toast. Such a woman was, of course, able to introduce her husband to influential members of the nobility and gentry. They lived extravagantly at Newman Street and in keeping with the progressive increase of James' income.

He was still hankering for official recognition though his reputation by now was in no need of such help, and he appears to have promptly acted on the suggestion made to him in 1803, that he should seek to become an A.R.A. He wanted it as a painter (as an engraver only he could not become a R.A.), but the Committee would only accept him as an engraver so he gave up the idea, and it was not till 1808 that he did become an Associate, and 1811 before he was a full R.A.

The wealth of the landowners and farmers was advanced by the wars, and their pride in their fine animals was boundless. Equestrian paintings had long been popular, but it now became fashionable for breeders to have portraits of their cattle, sheep and pigs. James Ward was not alone in this field, but he got a good many commissions and he was known to Lord Somerville, President of the Board of Agriculture, whose portrait he painted in the romantic uniform of the Home Guard of the day, a unit of which he had raised and commanded.

Somerville's rival, the founder of the Board, Sir John Sinclair, Bart., met Ward in the Isle of Thanet in 1804 and gave him a commission to paint a highly bred cow of the neighbourhood. The result was so pleasing to Sinclair, once again President of the Board, that he arranged for Ward to become the Board's chief painter of animal portraits. The Board had formulated a scheme to develop livestock breeding by securing portraits of outstanding examples of every breed of livestock in the country, and James was selected to do most of the work. These pictures were exhibited in the Academy, and were favourably criticised and many commissions came from private owners of livestock. It is characteristic that his



Fig. III. Rustic Felicity. By courtesy of the British Museum.

cattle were all intensely powerful in appearance, and his dray horses, with thrusting withers, straining harness to near breaking point. His charges increased with his popularity and he received as much as a hundred guineas for a single animal. He was as busy with animal portraits as Reynolds with those of human beings; Sir Walter Gilbey thought his paintings of horses had never been surpassed.

With this accession of popularity and prosperity James Ward's always overwhelming vanity began to destroy him. He quarrelled with almost everybody about prices and payments. He quarrelled with members of the nobility who were his private clients, he quarrelled with them as the Board and with Boydell's, a firm of publishers who were to pay for pictures of animals made for the Board. The details of these transactions are obscure and need a good deal of investigation, but it seems that there was a catch in Ward's contract with Boydell's that was likely to lead to a difference of opinion, if nothing more. There were complaints, too, that James had been very extravagant when travelling to paint these animals, and on his side that the conveyance provided for him was old and ramshackle, having finally to be sold for a trifling sum, but he did manage to paint some two hundred pictures of animals and to produce a great number of other pictures and studies of rural scenes, country seats, domestic scenes, and bucolic and other subjects. With all his faults of temper and defects of character James Ward was a man of surpassing industry and indefatigable energy. His painting of Gordale Scar, now hanging in the Tate, is a *tour de force* undertaken in a spirit of bravado, and in face of a large and informed body of opinion that assured him the task could not be encom-

passed. The bull in the foreground is a striking example of Ward's ability to convey the sense of great and virile strength in the beast, and the same is true of the animals seen in repose in his picture, "Regent's Park." It can equally be seen in "Disobedience in Danger," while a gentler note is struck in the "Gleaners," "Industrious Cottagers," and many other pieces of that kind, some of which are kindly and some not without a smack of rather sardonic humour.

But a change was coming over Ward. His success, "a triumph of industry, informed by talent," his continuous quarrels, his preoccupation with the transports of a fantastic species of religion—he was a convinced and staunch Irvingite—and his overwhelming vanity, combined to lead him still further astray in his conception of the boundless powers he possessed. He began to hear voices inaudible to others and to see visions, and in 1814 he set himself out to become another Blake. His poem, "Above the Level," is a paean of praise of himself, and his morbid fantasy began to affect his painting, though the plenitude of his powers remained to him for some years more.

The final victory of Waterloo that put a term to the long French wars in 1815 changed life for a large proportion of the nation, as the coming of peace after a war always does. For James Ward it might have led to great new triumphs, but his spirit was now so warped that it would have been impossible to find any set of circumstances, however favourable, in which he could have continued to flourish. His religious fervour had led him to indulge in aspirations to rival Rubens and the great masters of allegory. His opportunity came when the British Institute offered him a thousand guineas to paint



Fig. IV. Regent's Park, Cattle Piece. By courtesy of the Tate Gallery.

an allegorical picture to celebrate the Duke of Wellington's victory. Ward became obsessed with the idea and took five years to complete the picture. The subject is of no interest in relation to his pictures of the rural England of his day; it was an appalling concatenation of ideas and was on a specially woven canvas of 36 feet by 21 feet, instead of the 16 feet by 21 feet ordered. Ward was no less than furious when the Institution informed him that a picture of the first size could not be hung on a wall of the second dimensions, and suggested that the room should be demolished and be rebuilt to a size suitable for his work. In self-defence Ward painted several other allegorical pictures, but none of them met with the success of his rural scenes and his animal portraits.

Ward's apotheosis was definitely passed by 1825, although he continued to produce pictures with his distinctive vigour. But they ceased to attract the same attention, and when he went to live at Cheshunt in 1830 he ceased to be an active force in the aesthetic life of his day, though he continued to work at his art. The real end of his professional career came when he exhibited a "Monkey tickling a bullock's ear with a feather" in 1838, though a dribble of production continued thereafter.

His ventures in literature with poems and pamphlets were not highly successful, and his entry into commerce with the production of a waterproof boot blacking that contained no black was not in the least likely to be productive of the great return he confidently expected. His fame remains securely founded on his rural scenes and animal portraits. His life was long, graced by great and deserved success, but hampered by lack of education and a deplorable childhood, embarrassed by the defects of character doubtless largely the result of the conditions of his youth, harassed by family squabbles of his own making, by two unsuccessful marriages, and by the black clouds of superstition. He was never a happy man, and he died a poor one, dependant upon the charity of that institution, with which he had been angry so often, the Royal Academy.

A long life is most desirable. Few would deny that,

especially if it is accompanied by fairly good health. Ward enjoyed long life, but he was unable to maintain his early successes through all of it.

The England into which Ward was born was mainly a rural England; the England in which he died was largely industrial—a new thing. For rather more than half of his life the nobility and gentry and their more prosperous tenantry were occupied almost wholly in the development of their countryside. They wanted it recorded visually, and Ward was one of the most gifted of the painters who served them. Though there was a continuing demand for paintings of rural scenes all through his life, and there still is, it was not a demand for representational drawings of animals to scale.

## Yorkshire Church Plate

THE summer exhibition at Temple Newsam House this year was devoted to church plate from the county of Yorkshire and was opened by His Grace the Archbishop of York.

Some important pieces of pre-Reformation plate, notably the chalice from Goathland and the mazer bowl from Lowthorpe, both dating from the XVth century, were shown. The majority of the pieces included in this exhibition were executed between 1570 and 1770, showing the development of style during those years. Among the most outstanding groups of plate was the altar set made for Ripon Minster by John Plummer of York in 1675, which has a right to be considered among the finest in the country. Although many of the pieces shown were made in London, there was a representative selection of pieces marked at the Northern Assay offices of York, Newcastle, Chester, Hull and Leeds.

The exhibition was not confined to English silver, and several foreign chalices, most of them dating from the XVIth century, were included. There were also candlesticks, baptismal vessels and pieces of secular plate given to the Church as well as the sacramental vessels.



## COVER NOTE

THE charming painting of the "Annunciation" illustrated on our cover is assigned by experts to the Master of Liesborn, a XVth-century Westphalian artist who is known under this title after the great altarpiece he executed for the Church of the Benedictine Cloister in Liesborn, near Munster. During the Napoleonic campaigns, the altarpiece was taken apart, some of the panels coming to the National Gallery in London.

It is not often that an opportunity is offered of studying a work by this highly interesting early German artist, whose style represents a prolongation and adaptation of the Van Eyck tradition, blended with far-off echoes of the fresh poesy of the School of Cologne. Contemporary with Geertgen tot Sint Jans, and also with Gerard David, the Master of Liesborn shares with these Dutch artists a closer kinship with Van Eyck than was felt by the Flemish artists of the same period. Yet the only parallel that can be established between them is that of equal directness and simplicity of statement. This is obvious by comparison of our "Annunciation" with Geertgen's "Adoration of the Magi" (in the Cleveland Museum) or the "Nativity" (National Gallery, London); it can still be felt in the small "Annunciation" by Gerard David—very likely an early work—at the Detroit Institute of Arts, but a wide divergence sets in if a parallel is attempted with David's later works. In fact, in the Detroit "Annunciation" there is already felt, in the treatment of the faces and the folds of the angel's gown and mantle, a diffusion and adumbration of plastic values, giving the painting a soft, delicate charm, but far removed from the Eyckian ideal of "lapidary precision," as it is so aptly termed by Professor van Puyvelde.

The angel in our "Annunciation," on the contrary, in its simple, unpretentious way, is nevertheless a true linear descendant of Van Eyck's great singing angels in the "Mystic Lamb" triptych. He wears not the light, swirling robes of the later Flemish angels, but a heavy, hieratic cope, held at the neck by an unusual morse: a plain, concave disk of heavy gold, oddly primitive and bold, but related in mood to the magnificently ornate morses worn by the Van Eyck angels. The wings of this angel also have the proud alertness of those pictured in early Flemish work: long, keen, and functional as a swallow's, with pinions stretched taut and still filled with the wind of flight. The mass of light, creped hair also seems blown back by a strong current, suggestive of motion arrested but a flash instant ago, though the heavy folds of the cope fall straight and heavy, with the almost metallic rigidity of gold-shot damask. The band bearing the angelic salutation curls around the angel's sceptre in a scroll reminiscent of those wreathing the figures of the Sybils in the outer panels of the Ghent altarpiece.

Again, the Madonna is Eyckian in mood, with her hair falling freely on both sides of her face, in lustrous ripples—not drawn back behind the ears, in the austere manner of Memlinc or Van der Weyden. All is joyous and sweet about the little maid—no mystic undertones here, no open forebodings of the tragedy to come. With cheerful grace she receives the message from the amiable celestial envoy, and her submission is that of a guileless child. That the meaning of the scene, however, may be clear even to the simplest soul, the painter has expressed it with one of the most naive and touching of the ancient symbols: a miniature image of an infant, shouldering a cross, darts down towards Mary, in the wake of the symbolical dove of the Holy Ghost.

With how many small nuances and personal inflections has this Westphalian artist (consciously or otherwise) charged his picture. Yet, we may be sure, that he clung to tradition as to a lifeline, humbly and admiringly. As to the theme he chose, or was assigned: surely, none since earliest ages has been pictured by so many artists, and by most of them over and over again, with infinite variations.

It might seem that the well had run dry, that nothing else, nothing new, could possibly be conceived in its treatment. The Italians had shown their Annunciata in a lovely garden, in a loggia, in a palace; the Flemish artists had taken us to her bower, and pictured her surrounded with a wealth of intimate and symbolic appurtenances. Yet along came one like the Master of Liesborn, to pick up this challenge—not even imagining that it was such—simply holding, in simplicity of heart, to the motto of Hubert Van Eyck, "Als ick kan," "All I can, the best that is in me. . . ."

And here is the result. As many Annunciations as the world contains, there is not one quite like this one, with its stark barrenness, filled with the cool, sharp air of mountain heights, its four tall windows, overlooking a wide, clear sweep of landscape, but barred each one (so that whichever way we turn, we cannot escape it) with the unmistakable symbol of the cross. The small cubicle, an oratory, is bathed in an unflinching whiteness of light, giving to each factor of the sparse composition the perfect clearness and emphasis it needs, and can well stand, in its absolute honesty of statement. The two figures are set in the immediate foreground, further enhancing the impression of great depth.

M. L. D'OTRANGE.

## WORCESTER PORCELAINS

The Editor, APOLLO.

Dear Sir,—I wonder whether you would allow me to enlist the aid of APOLLO readers in a project which I am about to undertake, the writing of an account of the later Worcester porcelains of the Flight, Chamberlain, Grainger, and Kerr & Binns periods.

It is my opinion, and I believe the opinion of many other collectors and students of porcelain, that these wares deserve a book devoted entirely to them. Unfortunately, there is a sad lack of details of factory history, and I would greatly appreciate the loan of any sort of documents or references which would throw light upon such matters as artists' names, inter-factory working, outside decoration and so on. At the same time, since so many specialist dealers have helped me in the past with photographs of outstanding pieces, might I call upon them again in this present regard, and upon private collectors, in order that the photographic section of the proposed book may be fully representative?

Yours faithfully,

25 High Street,  
Bewdley, Worcestershire.

STANLEY W. FISHER.

## LE BISCUIT

Dear Sir,—I should like to draw attention to two statements in Monsieur Filsjean's article on Le Biscuit in your May number.

1. "Croquis 7," which shows the ordinary interlaced L's with which one is familiar in Vincennes glazed and coloured porcelain, is said to be the mark on Biscuit of "Vincennes, 1752." In fact, however, the biscuit of Vincennes, while often showing the marks of the repairer, did not show the mark of the interlaced L's, and, as Chavagnac and Grollier said magisterially in their *Histoire des Manufactures Françaises de Porcelaine* (page 257), "il faut rejeter toutes les pièces portant cette marque, comme de vulgaires centrefaçons." If Monsieur Filsjean knows of a piece of biscuit of 1752 with this mark, one would dearly like to know where it is.

2. "Croquis 8 and 9" show the marks of 1792 and 1800, both said to be *pâte tendre*. But *pâte tendre* had been replaced by *pâte dure* for biscuit by about 1775, and if Monsieur Filsjean can say where one can find soft paste biscuit of those dates, the information would be heartily welcomed.

Yours faithfully,

13, West Eaton Place,  
London, S.W.1.

WILFRED J. SAINSBURY.

M. Filsjean writes:

1. Vincennes used interlaced L's, but without putting years of manufacture between the letters (as Sèvres did). Non-enamelled porcelain inevitably escapes the rule and is judged by its whiteness and the fineness of the paste. 2. Hard paste dates from the end of Louis XV's reign, but was slow in establishing itself. Soft paste continues until circa 1800. Soft paste of the Revolution period (1789–1800) can still be found with dealers; personally, I have six small plates in *pâte tendre* of this period and have had other soft paste Revolution porcelain in my possession. Fakes were produced when Sèvres liquidated its stock of white soft paste in the middle of the XIXth-century, but are easily distinguishable from genuine pieces.

For more complete information, see the twelfth edition of *Graesse Jaennicke* (Berlin, 1909).

## EVENTS IN HOLLAND

IN the second half of this month, on August 25, the annual art and antique dealers' Fair will open its gates for the sixth time in the Delft Prinsenhof Museum. Although the publication of the current issue of APOLLO precedes the opening date of this art exhibition of international interest, a preview of some important exhibits can be given for readers of APOLLO. A more detailed comment will be given in the September number. About thirty art dealers from Amsterdam, The Hague and the provinces will participate in this year's Fair. Notwithstanding the scarcity of works of art of exceptional quality a visit to the show of this season can be strongly recommended.

The list of exhibitors, discussed in alphabetical order, begins with Jac. Aalderink, from Amsterdam, who brings, according to tradition, Chinese porcelain in great variety from early periods to the end of the XVIIIth century, as well as fine ethnographical specimens. Aardewerk, The Hague, specialises in old jewels, Aronson, Amsterdam, in furniture. He shows among others a walnut commode-table from the Mossel collection which was to be seen in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum in the great exhibitions in 1929 and 1936. Messrs. Beeling, from Leeuwarden, will show a very interesting oakwood Renaissance bedstead and a Hague porcelain-tureen signed with the stork underglaze.

Bless, of Lent, near Nijmegen, specialist in sculpture and oakwood furniture, as well as de Boer from Amsterdam, dealing with old master paintings, did not disclose so far their contributions. Cramer, of The Hague, lays again the stress on Italian and French art. He brings among others a choice collection of French XVIIIth-century colour-prints and portrait-miniatures and also some Italian sculptures. The only Rotterdam dealer, van Dam, has sent in a carved XVIIIth-century longcase-clock, signed Glazer Rotterdam and a Queen Anne commode; Denijs, Amsterdam, two side-tables ascribed to Weisweiler.

The large collection of Dirven, Eindhoven, comprises sculpture, French enamels and ivories. Enneking, Amsterdam, brings pictures, van Gendt, from Blaricum, fine old books and Hoogendijk, Amsterdam, a signed and dated view of a harbour by Horace Vernet, and a nice flower still-life by van der Ast, 1622. Fine Delftware and silver are to be found among the sumptuous exhibit of Morpurgo, Amsterdam; for instance a Kuan-Yin in Delft pottery signed APK. This mark is generally called "Pijnacker" but as a result of recent research these pieces are considered as a work of Pieter Adriaensz, Kocx. Also Nijstad, Lochem and The Hague has brought together again a large collection of furniture, china and, in recent years, pictures. "Oudt-Holland", The Hague, shows two winter landscapes by Beerstraeten, Peters, from Tilburg, many examples of old furniture, Perez, of course, oriental carpets, and van der Ploeg, Amsterdam, old masters.

Fine Renaissance jewels decorate the rich silver exhibit of Messrs. Premela & Hamburger, Amsterdam; Schretlen, Amsterdam, brings next to this special line of old sculpture a coloured drawing by Averkamp and stained glass. Coins and medals are Schulman's domain. A still-life by Pieter de Ring and an interior of an Antwerp church are to be seen at the stand of "St. Lucas," The Hague. Staal, Amsterdam, who participates in this year's Fair again, after an interval of several years, did not announce so far his sending in, and the same applies to Stodel and Vecht, both from Amsterdam. Walter von Wenz, Eindhoven, exhibits, apart from oakwood furniture, a signed van Goyen drawing from the Habich collection, Cassel, a landscape from the Rembrandt school and an early Rubens drawing with a historical subject and a signed and 1628 dated Esaias van de Velde from the collec-



ANTIQUES FAIR, DELFT  
Section of Furniture, China and other Works of Art.  
By courtesy of the Dutch Art Dealers' Association

tion Hofstede de Groot. Prof. v. Regteren Altena has sustained the attributions to these masters. The list is closed with Wiegersma, from Utrecht, who brings XVth-century ivories, enamels and early sculpture. The high level of the Fair is ensured again through the very severe preceding inspection. Only works of art of good quality are considered worthy to pass into the Delft Museum.

The recent summer sale at Messrs. Frederik Muller, in Amsterdam, gave some good results for old masters: a portrait of a young man by F. Bol realised 3,800 guilders, a Dusart after Ostade the same price; a pair of R. Brakenburch's interiors with merry company 3,100 guilders, a charming small dune-landscape by van Goyen, 4,500 guilders. Two views of St. Marc's Place in Venice, given to Jacopo di Paolo Marieschi, brought 5,000 guilders and a large van der Neer, dated 1645, formerly in the collection Ant. W. M. Mensing, 7,800. Two landscapes by Salomon van Ruysdael reached six and seven thousand, respectively, and a typical Roelof van Vries, also from the Mensing collection, with view of Haarlem 2,700 guilders. A series of 12 *chine de commande* plates, *famille rose* decoration with Hollanders in the centre, reached the remarkable sum of 3,500 guilders at the last sale of Messrs. Mak van Waay, Amsterdam.

A very useful booklet has just been issued by the Dutch Ministry of Fine Arts: a complete guide of museums and important private collections which are open to the public. Nearly 350 museums in the Netherlands are recorded with the name of the director, short history of and literature about the collection as well as a summary of the principal contents of the collections. The second part of the book gives more than 50 private art collections in Holland which may be visited, free of charge, during three afternoons in the week after application or with introduction. Valuable information may be gathered from the contents of the book as to the field of interest of Dutch collectors.

Visitors to the Netherlands will find a series of interesting art exhibitions which will go on till next month; lack of space prevents dealing with them in this issue of APOLLO, but a critical survey may be expected in the following number.

Special attention must be drawn to the marvellous exhibition of French still-lives from four centuries and the Hercules Seghers show—both in the Boymans Museum, Rotterdam. Simultaneously modern Italian sculpture of striking quality is to be seen in the part of this museum under the title "Mostra '54."

H. M. C.



# CERAMIC CAUSERIE

## The Case of the Undertaker

There is a document in the British Museum entitled: *The Case of the Undertaker of the Chelsea Manufacture of Porcelain Ware* (Lansdowne MS. 829, Folio 21). It has been conjectured from internal evidence that this was written by the proprietor of the factory, Nicolas Sprimont, some time between the years 1752 and 1759.

The document states that only Chinese porcelain is allowed into the country, after payment of duty; that other porcelain or pottery can only be imported if it is strictly for the private use of the importer, and is liable to be forfeited if it is offered for sale. In spite of this prohibition, the writer complains that large quantities are continually being offered for sale openly both in shops and at auction.

In view of this, the writer is apprehensive of the effect on the Chelsea factory; which is unprotected and facing unfair State-subsidised competition from abroad. He alleges that:

... a certain foreign minister's house has been for a course of years a warehouse for this commerce, and the large parcel advertised for public sale on the seventh of next month is come, or is to come, from thence.

The remedy suggested by the writer of the document is a simple one:

The execution of the laws which have all along been in force, and which can give no offence to anybody, it is apprehended will answer the purpose; all that is therefore requested is, that the Commissioners of the Customs may be cautioned with regard to the admission of this ware under the pretence of private use, and that the public sale of it may not be permitted any more than that of other prohibited goods. A few examples of seizures would put a stop to this, and which cannot be difficult, as all Dresden china has a sure mark to distinguish it by...

Research in the files of a newspaper published during 1753 shows that the Commissioners of the Customs were not completely inactive. It may be no more than a coincidence that issues of the same journal, *The General Evening Post*, for other years make no mention of similar events, and we can only surmise that perhaps the extracts printed below relate to occurrences that took place on account of *The Case of the Undertaker*.

March 1. The Custom-House Officers have seized, within these few days, a great quantity of Dresden China, in several Shops about Town

March 8. Yesterday in the Afternoon four Custom-house Officers seized upwards of a hundred Pounds Worth of Dresden Porcelaine at a China Shop near St. James's.

August 7. A great Quantity of Dresden China has been seized within these few Days by the Officers of the Customs.

## A Note on Longton Hall

The advertisement discovered in a copy of the London *General Evening Post* for October 3rd, 1758, by Mr. A. J. B. Kiddell and reprinted in the *Transactions of the English Porcelain Circle* (III, 1931, page 74) refers to the "Longton China-Warehouse, At the Corner of St. Paul's Church-Yard, next Watling-Street, London." The same tri-weekly newspaper also printed an advertisement, reprinted for the first time below, which appeared in the issue for July 14, 1759. It runs:

WHEREAS the Copartnership lately subsisting between Messrs. BANKS and ROBERTSON, at the Staffordshire Warehouse, in St. Paul's Church-Yard, was, by mutual Consent, dissolved the 24th of last Month; Mr. Robertson has, on his own separate Account, opened a large Warehouse, at the East Corner of St.

Paul's Church-Yard, next Watling-Street, and laid in a great Variety of China, Glass, Worcester, Staffordshire Ware, &c. where all Persons in Town and Country, who will be so kind as to favour him with their Commands, shall have the best and neatest Goods at the lowest Price, wholesale or retail, and their Orders punctually executed by

Their most obedient humble Servant,  
St. Paul's Church-Yard,  
July 2, 1759.  
JOHN ROBERTSON.

It would appear that John Robertson took over the lease of the late premises of the Longton Hall warehouse; which we can now presume was given up by Littler or his representatives prior to mid-summer, 1759. The next notice of the manufactory is the well-known auction-sale, held at Salisbury in September of the year following. The announcement of this sale in *The Salisbury Journal* stated cryptically that "the partnership is dissolved." Can there be any connexion between that partnership and the partnership, also dissolved, between Messrs. Banks & Robertson?

## A Cup and Cover for Jamaica

Illustrated here is a glazed pottery two-handled cup and cover, plainly decorated with a print in blue of Prince Albert on either side of the cup. It is a commonplace example of mid-XIXth century Staffordshire make and, on the surface, calls for little comment. The base, however, bears an interesting mark printed in blue: MANUFACTURED FOR D. BRANDON, KINGSTON, JAMAICA. Made to order



—probably an order for some hundreds of pieces—this one has remained in England. It is what would be called to-day a rejected export: it is somewhat over-fired in places with the result that the glaze is far from smooth. This would account for the fact that the cup and cover never reached its destination, probably having been taken home by some worker from the pottery where it was made.

## An Early Collector

About the year 1690 lived a Mr. John Conyers, a great antiquary, especially in those things that related to London. At the beginning of its rebuilding he made it his business to inquire of the labourers who dug foundations what they found, and gave them encouragement to save them for him, especially old money, many weapons, etc. In St. Paul's, at the West end, he had a great Roman utensil; also in Goodman's Fields; and a collection well stored with antiquities both in art and nature, and was one of the first in that way. He purchased whatever was out of course that came to his hands; and sometimes those that sold old iron furnished him with a rarity not to be seen in an age.

From: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1790.  
GEOFFREY WILLS.

## LONDON NOTES

BY MARY SORRELL

**H**ANDLING a pair of pistols recently at The Parker Gallery, Albemarle Street, I felt extremely thankful not to have to carry one in my bag for self-preservation, for these were used in the days of highway robbers and stage coaches, and were as necessary to a woman as to a man. However, they are now destined for pleasurable purposes, and, oddly enough, were made by a woman, Mary Davidson of Alnwick, in 1854. Each has a flint-lock and silver mask butt of a lion's head, and also a silver diamond-shaped escutcheon side plate, engraved with a marshal design. Housed in their original case made by John Lead-bitter of Newcastle, this is complete with powder flask and bullet mould. The Parker Gallery are specialists in old prints, and have, too, a whole collection of old military swords of the majority of the cavalry regiments of the British Army circa 1830-1940. Here also I saw several models of ships, one strung in mid-air between two electric lights! It is a church model of *The Amsterdam*, Royal Yacht of the Prince of Orange, and was made to hang in a church, where it received a blessing. This was thought to speed the ship on a safe journey, and sometimes one still comes across an isolated model in a church. *The Amsterdam*, built in 1665, possessed sixty guns, and took part in several North Sea actions. On the stern of the model (which is 50 in. long and valued at £175), we find some elaborate carving showing the arms of William of Orange, and the lion figure-head bearing the arms of the City of Amsterdam.

Churchill's, in Marylebone High Street, carry an extremely large stock of specimen glasses such as balusters, balustroids; white and air twists. The graceful twists are amazingly varied and most delicately patterned, and I saw a very, very rare glass—a Frederick of Prussia wheel engraved goblet with a portrait of the King, together with an inscription and his coat of arms. In the same case were Hanoverian and Williamite glasses (the latter made to commemorate the Battle of the Boyne), and also the more familiar Jacobite glasses, engraved with emblems. Another case contained some weighty balusters, from 1690, made after lead was introduced into glass round about 1680, and their knopped stems bore angular, acorn, cylindrical and other shapes. This firm has a very wide range of cut glass enhanced by the large collection purchased recently in Ireland, of the late Captain H. D. Clarke. I liked particularly a water-jug with diamond-cut swirled flutes and fan-shaped scalloped edging, as sparkling as water itself. Among the paperweights was a five-windowed Clichy, with a millefiori mushroom inside, and a sapphire blue overlay—most unusual in that type of design.

One would never tire of the tranquil pastoral scene and mellow tones of an early Turner I saw at Agnews, Old Bond Street. It is "Oxford from the Abingdon Road", and was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1812, and engraved by John Pye. Equally serene in a different vein is a portrait of Mrs. Catherine Clements, by Romney. She was the oldest daughter of the Rt. Hon. John Beresford, and wife of the Rt. Hon. Theophilus Clements, M.P., and here looks charming in a pearly grey hat and dress beneath a transparent soft black coat. The work possesses the gentle sweetness so characteristic of Romney's brush, and was painted fairly late, some time after 1800. For those, like myself, who find the Pre-Raphaelites endlessly fragrant, Agnews have a brilliant painting by Millais, entitled "The Huguenot". It is signed and dated 1852, and was originally exhibited at the Royal Academy the same year. Full of symbolism, this picture tells the story of a young girl trying to tie the white scarf of the Huguenot round her lover's arm. Flowers and leaves growing in the garden such as ivy, nasturtium, and the torn red rose at their feet, cause us to muse in silent delight, and to look at the appealing models . . . a Miss Ryan and General Lemprière.

A famous potter who was born a century earlier than



Antique silver Coffee Pot, Newcastle 1749, by Wm. Partis.  
(Courtesy D. and J. Wellby, Ltd.)

Millais has given intense pleasure to a tremendous public—his name, Josiah Wedgwood. I have been to see a big collection of his work at Gered's in Piccadilly Arcade, where they have something of every period he created, from the first cream-coloured pots known as "Queensware". I noticed a very quaint decorated jelly-mould of a cylindrical shape, made about 1770, and seldom to be found now. Jasper ware, of which the blue ground and raised white design is perhaps the most popular, was first introduced in 1775, and at Gered's there is a variety of this in a number of beautiful shades, including a pair of rare blue flower holders with raised figures in white. These are quite exquisite. I noticed also a fine black caustic decorated basalt vase made by Wedgwood and painted at Chelsea. Most unusual was the dish made during the famine of 1795, with a lid moulded like a pie crust.

Wellby's of Garrick Street (founded in 1820), and now directed by Mr. Guy Wellby of the fourth generation, have a large display of fine silver, and on a dinner table the pair of Queen Anne two-branch candelabra, made by Pierre Platel, to whom Paul de Lamerie was apprenticed, would be most romantic. Two salvers particularly interested me—one antique and the other modern—the former, a Chippendale silver salver made by John Tuite, circa 1752, with a pie-crust border and coat of arms centrepiece, is valued at £400. It is 16½ in. wide. The contemporary salver was designed for Coronation Year, and was made on the premises. Circular-shaped with a leaf border, and the Royal coat of arms in the centre, it is stamped with the Coronation Hall Mark, and though naturally influenced by past centuries, it shows what splendid craftsmen are working now. We are sometimes apt to forget the countless strokes of the hammer that are required to fashion minute depressions as well as the richer forms, both of which culminate in these eternally satisfying works of art.

# THE RIDDLE OF CHRIST'S PORTRAITS

BY W. N. BROWN

PICTORIAL Christianity has presented many problems to the great painters of every nationality and school, but none has baffled them so much as the countenance and form of Jesus Christ. Imagination, psychic influence, and the miraculous even, have each played their part in conveying to the world what Christ might have looked like when He was at the zenith of His ministry, for during the great eras of sacred painting it was only natural that every effort should be made to produce an authentic likeness of the Man.

While it must be confessed that imagination has been a prominent factor in the matter, there is certain evidence on record which has been exploited to the full by the leading painters. This evidence, though, is by no means conclusive, and all manner of prejudice and indifference among ecclesiastics have been levelled against it. But its importance could not be denied. Even that part which savours of the fantastic could not be ignored, for the evidence as a whole was made the basis of a "type" by the most influential painters, whose deeper vision saw in it the possibilities of truth.

One may, of course, rule out any authenticity connected with the earliest known portraits of Christ, which were found in the catacombs of Rome, though much could be said for the spirited way in which some of them were treated. Nor do the intensely formal and unnatural types shown in medieval art lay any claim to truth: they are the products of priestly prescription and fancy. That the Fathers of the Church dealt in art-prescription and censorship must not be denied, which resulted everywhere in the formalism already mentioned. But this was a state that happily passed away and gave place to an adequate image of Christ which has survived the centuries.

It is amazing to record that some of the earliest known representations of Christ were not located in the habitations of believers, but in the abodes of heathens. In the temple of the Emperor Alexander Severus (about A.D. 230) the Saviour's figure was found side by side with those of Apollonius and Orpheus, which conveys the impression that the character of Christ was such that it found ample respect among certain cultured pagans, who deemed it hard to live without pictures and statuary. Yet to portray so divine a thing as the face of Christ was, to the early theologians, something akin to sacrilege. It appears that through certain theological scruples Eusebius of Cesarea (one of the Fathers) positively refused to obtain for the sister of Constantine the Great a picture of Christ. And a century later St. Augustine made a surprising declaration that nothing was known of the personal appearance of the Saviour.

The truth is that the earlier Christians were not interested in the physiognomy of their Master, for anything that pleased the eye by its grace and charm was duly considered worldly and of this earth, earthy. The beauty of the physical world was deemed an impediment to the spiritual and should therefore be evaded or despised. In none of the Gospels do we find any description of His physical appearance. A few centuries had to pass before people began to wonder what Jesus of Nazareth looked like—a time, of course, when all personal contact with Him and His contemporaries had been lost.

Thus, His appearance became a topic of speculation rather than research or investigation. Not until a minority of the Fathers began to exercise their imagination on the subject and made reference to Christ's bodily shape and expression do we find any real interest taken in the matter; and even those who recorded their views, always emphasised the spiritual and moral characteristics and dehumanised His form by associating the words "inglorious" and "undistinguished" with their so-called descriptions. A little later, St. Jerome considered the matter in a better light,

when he said: "Had He not had something heavenly also in His face and in His eyes, the apostles never could have followed Him at once, nor would those who had come to arrest Him have fallen to the ground."

There was, of course, nothing authentic about this; but its obvious good sense had the effect of opening up the whole subject for future thought and investigation. The result was that certain evidence was discovered, and it became so attractive and revered that portraits of Our Lord followed one another in quick succession.

The origin of these portraits has been alternately ascribed to a picture by Pontius Pilate, or by St. Luke, or by Nicodemus (reputed to have been a sculptor) or more remarkably still, by Jesus Himself. Of the first three instances nothing further can be said; but the belief that Christ produced His own likeness was inspired by the story of Evagrius, a writer of the VIth century. His evidence runs as follows: "King Abgarius of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, sought relief from an incurable sickness by sending a messenger to Christ in Judea, that He might come to Edessa and cure Abgarius of his disease. This messenger was a painter named Ananias, who was ordered that in the event of Christ being unable to come to Edessa, he was to bring back with him a portrait of Christ. Ananias delivered the message, but was thwarted in the act of drawing the Saviour's likeness by Christ's repeated movements. Christ, however, seeing the difficulty, accomplished his purpose for him: Christ, having washed His face, wiped it with a cloth, which He gave, with a message for Abgarius, to Ananias, who found, to his surprise, a likeness of Christ imprinted on the cloth."

Abgarius, it is stated, was instantly cured by the touch of this portrait, and, needless to say, it became afterwards a sacred object of veneration at Edessa, until it was carried to Rome, where it is still preserved in the Church of San Silvestro in Capite. It is also recorded both by Eusebius and Procopius (another Father) that an interchange of letters actually took place between Christ and King Abgarius.

How this early writer obtained his "copy" is unknown. It is hard to think that such a man interested, as he must have been, in religion would have stooped to the extent of fabricating a story for the purpose of creating a mere sensation. Yet it has been the custom to ignore the story despite the fact that no evidence against its validity exists. It is worth preserving. In any case, one either believes it or does not.

More interesting, as rational evidence, is the striking letter of Publius Lentulus. This letter was addressed to the Emperor Tiberius and the senate of Rome, and its translation from the original at Rome is partly as follows: "There hath appeared in these our days a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us . . . a man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance, such as the beholders both love and fear; his hair the colour of chestnut, full ripe, plain to his ears, whence downwards it is more orient, curling, and waving about his shoulders. In the midst of his head is a seam or a partition of his hair after the manner of the Nazarites; his forehead plain and very delicate; his face without a spot or wrinkle, beautified with the most lovely red; his nose and mouth so formed that nothing can be reprehended; his beard thickish in colour like his hair, not very long, but forked; his look, innocent and mature; his eyes, grey, clear and quick. In reproving he is terrible; in admonishing, courteous and fair spoken; pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity. It cannot be remarked that anyone saw him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In proportion of body, most excellent; his hands and arms most delicate to behold. In speaking very temperate, modest and wise. A man, for his singular beauty, surpassing the children of men."



If such were the characteristics of Jesus of Nazareth we can well understand why His followers both loved and feared Him. It is obvious that Lentulus imparts to Him all the attributes of the poet and the psychic rather than the theologian. The description coming, as it did, from a Roman government official, is painstaking, to say the least. The tone is unobtrusive, and the detail impresses one by its care and simplicity. Yet for all that, the date is missing and it has been assigned to the IIIrd century. And to make matters worse, the more prejudiced among the theologians have considered it spurious without stating any reasons for thinking so.

Lentulus (though contrary to history) has been called the predecessor of Pontius Pilate, in the government of Palestine. If that be true it is most probable that he would have seen and heard Christ as He moved about the dusty byways of His native land, for the Man of Sorrows, as well as joys, who was to cause a revolution in the world of thought and belief, had already astonished the multitude by the moral tone of His message. He was not to be evaded or ignored. And if, on the other hand, Lentulus was not the predecessor of Pilate, we may reasonably assume that He must have had some official business to transact in government circles at the time and could have obtained reports concerning Christ's appearance.

Despite the mystery that still surrounds this revealing letter, it must be pointed out that it became the chief source of inspiration for nearly all future portraits of Christ. There should be no doubt about that, for the pictorial evidence is overwhelming.

During the XIVth century the old and effete methods of depicting Christ—a man gloomy, distorted and ugly—were entirely disregarded, and a new attitude began to emerge—thanks to Lentulus. But St. Francis of Assisi, called the Knight of the Cheerful Countenance, had changed men's outlook upon life and religion: poor but happy, he had preached the gospel of Nature and beauty. Nature was the Art of God, and so the pictorial Christ must necessarily appear natural and comely. This new spirit affected the visual arts in all countries, but nowhere was it so marked as in Italy. The Church was at last being converted to the artists' ways—thanks to St. Francis and his followers, which included Giotto—the first of the early Renaissance painters to embark upon a natural conception of the human body and its movements. He rescued portraiture from its inevitable decay and unseemliness.

Inspired by the new trend in art and the spirit of individual freedom which accompanied it, artists sought to express the consummation of beauty in the form of Jesus Christ. It was indeed the most sacred task of the leading painters of the Italian schools, especially that of Florence, to say nothing of those masters of true realism who lived and worked in Flanders. Such an effort demanded the fullest powers of Leonardo da Vinci, that universal genius, whose sensitive hands could twist a horse-shoe as well as wield a brush. His well-known fresco, "The Last Supper," is typical of his

dramatic powers as an artist. And while he found it easy to find a living model who looked treacherous enough to make a Judas (the friar who charged him with procrastination) he was equally at his ease in portraying Jesus Christ and in giving Him the essential human touch. But it was Lentulus's beautiful letter that inspired him in the task. It must be conceded, I think, that this *Christ* comes nearer to absolute beauty than any other.

Another interesting discovery occurred in 1702, when H. Rowlands, a parson, was superintending the removal of some stones, near Aberfraw, Wales, for the purpose of making an antiquarian research. Here, Rowlands found a beautiful brass medal of the Saviour, in a fine state of preservation. This medal, which was given at the time to the keeper of the Ashmolean library at Oxford, has on one side the figure of a head answering the description given by Publius Lentulus. On the reverse side, it has the following inscription, written in Hebrew characters: "This is Jesus Christ, the Mediator or Reconciler;" or "Jesus, the Great Messias, or Man Mediator." Being found among the ruins of the chief Druids resident in Anglesea, it is not improbable that the curious relic belonged to some Christian connected with Bran the Blessed, who was one of Caractacus's hostages at Rome from A.D. 52 to 59, at which time the Apostle Paul was preaching the new gospel at Rome, and there died a martyr under the notorious Nero. Lentulus's evidence needs a lot of discouraging.

While the imagination and the resort to the aforementioned letter have each played an important part in telling us what Christ looked like, the psychic influence is plainly given us by William Blake, whose life was a series of spiritualistic manifestations. He often lived in the astral world. His water-colour drawing shows Christ as an entirely spiritual Being. That human touch, which He must have had, is missing in Blake's picture; and it was of the human touch that the majority of great painters were mindful.

In more recent years the tendency in portraying Christ has been to resort to what is known as "racial types." For instance, our own Holman Hunt, in his famous picture "The Light of the World," sees Christ as an Englishman with a classical air; Rembrandt made of Him a Dutchman; Rubens presents Him as a muscular Fleming; while the Hungarian painter Munkacsy paints Him with the full air of a Hungarian Jew.

The secular tendencies of modern times have, perhaps, found other gods than the One so beautifully presented to the world through the vision of the artist. And in the absence of witnessing any new approach to Christ's portrayal based on new inspiration or revelation, one cannot do better than study with sympathetic understanding those masterpieces of the past which if not absolutely authentic, do impart to the religious mind some idea of the great Galilean's personal appearance when He sojourned god-like and pure among the men, women, children, and byways of old Palestine.

## An English Devotee of the Renaissance

BY F. M. GODFREY

**A**MONG the English pioneer historians of the Renaissance in Italy, J. A. Symonds has joined the ranks of the forgotten worthies. And yet, his voluminous works on the *Age of the Despots*, the *Revival of Learning*, on *Arts and Letters*, and the *Catholic Reaction*, his *Studies and Sketches* are an inexhaustible source of information for the student of that period, a well-planned, unified picture of an age, in breadth and multifarious detail a true monument to the "helpless fecundity" of their author.

Fruit of an affluent age, of unlimited leisure, of wide travel and vast reading in contemporary sources, his book is a period-piece, a Victorian monument of learning and literary flourish, lacking—it is true—Burckhardt's genius

for "compression" and Pater's authenthical sense of values and inimitable phrase. What is dated in Symonds is his Victorian word-bombast, his mistaken sense of poetical prose, his striving to emulate Tennyson or Scott. Yet his panegyrics of natural beauty are only an interlude, a holiday from more serious studies, of the Victorian gentleman who travels in state with wife and friend and valet, now to the Pineta, now to Etna, now to Montepulciano, there to voice the inflation of his soul, after dining on *frittata di cervello*, fish and fowl and roast lamb, with a flask of the incomparable wine of the district.

No, as a writer of poetical prose Symonds is decidedly time-been, and it is this which adumbrates his massive

achievement as an historian with a ubiquitous, though sometimes uncritical knowledge of the political as well as the cultural stage. He was a naïve and omnivorous reader of chroniclers and historians, and had a dramatist's gift for presenting scenes of *terribilità*, in which his subject abounds, with calculated and breathtaking skill, which made his pages on the Malatesta of Rimini or the Baglioni of Perugia so superior to many works of imaginative fiction.

No one even now, working through the maze of biographical fact, relating to the Italian city-states and their tyrants, to Medicean Florence or the Court of Urbino, to the early efflorescence of humanist education under Vittorino da Feltre, and to the significant blend of fierce and murderous egotism with personal polish and learning, can do without the clear exposition of Symonds, his infectious enthusiasm, his strictures, his stupendous documentary evidence. Moreover, as a writer of history, he is quick-moving and succinct, with a grasp of men and events, though with a tendency towards the black-and-white school of historical appreciation.

A man so universally minded would leave no aspect of the Renaissance untouched, and, within the limitations of his age and of his style, he also pronounced upon the visual arts. Unhampered by our critical sensibilities, he must rank as a populariser of art, playing much on the sentimental strings of his own enthusiasm; but where he is moved by great

figure-art as before Signorelli's frescoes at Orvieto Cathedral, his descriptions are wholly adequate. Perhaps Symonds was guilty of romantic exaggeration in the stress he laid upon the more Satanic qualities of Renaissance personages, yet this is easily recognised and does no harm to this remarkable achievement, steeped as he was in the spirit of the age and capable of reflecting upon it with vigour and penetration. Curious how the men and women of a so profoundly bourgeois, peaceable and security-ridden era as the Victorian were attracted by the otherness, the *vivere-pericoloso* spirit of the Renaissance. On the strength of the vast canvas he drew of XVth- and XVIth-century Italy, J. A. Symonds must rank with Gregorovius as the foremost historian of the Renaissance.

The complex and attractively wicked period of the Italian Renaissance has suffered more than any other from the hand of historians whose vocation was the writing of fiction and from novelists with a bias for history. Characters as picturesquely satanic as Galeazzo Maria Sforza or Cesare Borgia offered their demoniac selves to the eloquent broadsides of the black-and-white school of historical presentation. In this concept of vision, based on the Italian Renaissance, John Addington Symonds is with the Stendhal of the Abbess de Castro, the Cenci and Vittoria Accoramboni the foremost English protagonist.

## LUCAS VAN GASSEL: LANDSCAPIST

THE rise of landscape art in Flanders in the early XVth century is an important landmark in European painting.

Joachim Patinir, who set the style, was long known as "the Father of Landscape" in recognition of this genesis of pure landscape and his contribution to it. Until recent analysis revealed a number of different painters working in this manner everything was light-heartedly attributed to Patinir himself or to "School of Patinir." In the reaction too much has probably been taken away from Patinir himself without plausible re-attribution.

The value of this process, however, has been the emergence of such masters as Herri met der Bles and others. Not least among them is Lucas van Gassel, for whom there is a growing recognition. His date is not exactly certain. He was born in Helmont about 1480, worked chiefly in Brussels, and died probably about 1560. In his day he was regarded as a person of importance, was a friend of Lamponius, the poet and humanist, who wrote a poem in his praise; whilst his portrait was painted by Jacob Bink and subsequently engraved by Jan Wierix.

He painted in both oil and water-colour, and it is noticeable in the work we illustrate, which is in the

collection of Mrs. Dorothy Hart, that the background has a softness and tenderness characteristic of the water-colour technique although the oil medium is being used. Van Gassel, like so many artists of the period, was not himself an originator. His works echo Patinir and Herri

met der Bles in the fantastic rock formations, the buildings, swans and other details. In this the great tree in the foreground recalls Massys; indeed there is in the Antwerp Museum a painting by Massys the composition of which is practically this in reverse. But such borrowings were the order of a day when artists were less concerned to be original either in subject or in style. The subject of St. Jerome in Meditation, often with the legend of the stolen ass which St. Jerome's lion returned to its monastic home as an incident of the middle distance,

was a favourite theme with this whole school. An etching of this subject by Lucas van Gassel was in the Flemish Art Exhibition of 1927. His works are rare, but the galleries of Brussels, Vienna, The Hague, Hamburg and Lille have outstanding examples.

Ascribed by Dr. Friedlander to Van Gassel, this delightful panel may be regarded as a key to his work. H. S.



St. Jerome in the Wilderness. By Lucas van Gassel. Panel. 17 by 21½ in.  
In the Collection of Mrs. Dorothy Hart.



# THE FOURTH NORTHERN ANTIQUE DEALERS' FAIR, HARROGATE, SEPTEMBER 6th-11th

THE Right Honourable Lord Kenyon has agreed to open the fourth Northern Antique Dealers' Fair at 11.30 a.m. on Monday, September 6th. Four of the many interesting pieces on show are illustrated below.



A silver waiter, George II 1735, by Robert Abercrombie. Exhibited by James R. Ogden and Sons, Ltd., of London and Harrogate.



A Chippendale carved mahogany commode with fitted top drawer, 52 in. wide. Exhibited by Quinney's, Ltd., of Chester.



A two-fold lacquer screen with four painted silk panels, 4ft. 11in. high. Exhibited by Thomas Bell of Newcastle upon Tyne

An antique Carabagh large runner 15 ft. 5 in. long by 6 ft. 4 in. wide. Exhibited by Walkers of Harrogate in association with Perez (London) Ltd.



## SALE ROOM NOTES & PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

**SILVER.** There was an important sale of English silver at Christie's at which a Charles II Toilet Service by Ralph Leeke 1680 and 1683 sold for £1,250. It was chased with chinoiserie and comprised a pair of octagonal Caskets and a Pair of octagonal Boxes and Covers, all fully marked, a Pair of small octagonal Boxes, makers mark only and an oblong mirror which was unmarked. The service had remained in the vendor's family since the XVIIth century. Another fine example of the XVIIth century was a James I parcel gilt Tankard 1618 maker's mark IP, a bell below (17 oz. 17 dwt.). This piece had a tapering body decorated with moulding, a scroll handle and is mentioned by Jackson in *English Goldsmiths*, 2nd edition, p. 114. It sold for £1,200. Of the later examples a cylindrical Coffee Pot by Paul de Lamerie, 1730, brought £1,350. This measured 8½ in. high, Britannia standard, and weighed 30 oz. 11 dwt. The plain tapering body had octagonal lower half with engraved foliage and strapwork, the flat cover was also engraved and the handle set at right angles to the body. This piece was from the collection of Lord Swaythling, 1910, and had been exhibited at St. James's Court, 1902, no. C.25. In the same sale was a Portuguese circular Dish weighing 10 oz. 16 dwt. which sold for £240. This piece is from the late XVth century but bears the London hallmarks for 1610—this is a rare occurrence, but there are other known examples and the marks were apparently struck to legitimise the sale of the pieces in this country.

Included in one of Sotheby's silver sales was a small collection of Norwich silver amongst which was a rare Elizabethan Norwich Wine Cup. This had a deep cylindrical bowl the lower part *repousse* with acanthus leaves, on a slender baluster stem and circular domical foot, 7 in. high, maker's mark an orb and cross (?) Peter Peterson, c. 1595, weight 4 oz. 15 dwt. The piece sold for £600. In the same collection was a pair of William III Norwich Tumbler Cups, 9 oz. 8 dwt., with maker's mark E.H. below a crown, 1697, which sold for £210. These were perfectly plain in design with contemporary initials on the bases. Sir Charles J. Jackson reproduces the marks of both lots of Norwich silver in *English Goldsmiths and their Marks* on p. 316, line 3, for the Wine Cup and p. 319, line 14, for the Tumblers.

The silver sold at Phillips, Son and Neale included a Coffee Pot, London 1750, 25 oz., which brought £80. This piece had tapering sides and moulded collet foot. A French Soup Tureen and Cover, Paris XVIIIth century, brought £60. This weighed 68 oz. and was decorated with ribbed border and leafage terminals to the handles. A George III four-piece chased Tea and Coffee Set, 96 oz., made £98.

Rogers, Chapman and Thomas made £56 for a four-piece Tea and Coffee Set, London 1830, 66 oz. 2 dwt. It had embossed decoration and a crest.

**LACE.** It is not often that a sale of lace is held, but at Phillips, Son and Neale antique lace, costumes and hand-fans realised a total of £1,260.

**CHINESE.** Christie's sold two important jade figures of Buffalo. One from the collection of Nairne Stewart-Sandeman was of veined and flecked sage green jade, recumbent with head turned, 11½ in. long, late Ming period, and sold for 2,300 gns. The other of mottled sage green, also recumbent, 12 in. long, Ming period, brought 2,600 gns., and had at one time been in the collection of the late Alexander Ionides. It was sent for sale by Mrs. R. D. Hotchkis. Both these figures are comparable to that illustrated by Stanley Charles Nott in *Chinese Jade Through the Ages*, pl. LV (b).

Sotheby's held a sale of Chinese porcelain which belonged to John F. Woodthorpe. Among the many fine pieces in this collection was a magnificent double-gourd Pilgrim flask decorated in underglaze blue with a large rosette, the centre of which is the yin-yang symbol, 10½ in. six character mark of Hsuan Te round the lip, and period. This sold for £700 and was formerly in the collection of a French Ambassador to China. It was exhibited in the Oriental Ceramic Society's exhibition of blue and white porcelain, 1953, No. 76. £340 was paid for a very rare XVth-century conical bowl, also decorated in blue and white, 9 in. diam., six-character mark of Hsuan Te within a double ring and period. This piece had been looted from the Summer Palace, Peking, and was shown in the same exhibition as the pilgrim flask. A superb pair of *famille-noire* cups enamelled in *famille-verte* brought £600. These measured 2½ in., fang sheng mark, K'ang Hsi period, and were exhibited at the O.C.S. Exhibition of Enamelled Polychrome Porcelain of the Manchu Dynasty, 1951, No. 46.

**PICTURES.** Sotheby's have now sold parts V, VI and VII of H. S. Reitlinger Collection. Part V was Old Master Drawings of the French and German Schools and Modern Drawings. In the French section a Head of a Young Girl in red chalk, 15½ in. by 11½ in., by Jean Baptiste Greauze sold for £260 and a landscape with a distant castle by Claude Lorrain, £440. This drawing, which measured 7½ in. by 7½ in., was in pen and ink and wash and was signed. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy 1953, Drawings by Old Masters, no. 374. Among the examples of the German School was the drawing for Isis in Prikheimer's MS. by Albrecht Durer. This measured 2½ in. by 1½ in., was in pen and ink and made £720. Prikheimer's writing on the back is pasted over. The section for Modern Drawings included

a "Landscape in Provence" by Eugene Delacroix, which made £420. In black chalk and water-colour, it was marked with the stamp of the artist's sale and measured 5½ in. by 12 in.

Part VI was Drawings by Artists of the English School (second section), in which a View of the Thames below Westminster Pier by Wenzel Hollar brought £420. This was in pen and sepia ink, inscribed and signed, and measured 5½ in. by 15½ in. Lake Maggiore by J. M. W. Turner, R.A., 7½ in. by 10½ in., gouache on blue paper, brought £240.

Christie's held a sale of Pictures by Old Masters in which was included a Portrait of Mrs. Anderson of Inchyra, *née* Mary Mitchellson, by Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A., 35 in. by 27 in., 2,100 gns. The sitter was wearing a white muslin dress with yellow sash and seated in a crimson chair. This portrait was exhibited at the Raeburn Exhibition, Edinburgh 1876, no. 199. Two other high-priced portraits were Thomas Gainsborough's portrait of Mr. Montagu of Avisford, Arundel, 29 in. by 24 in., 2,700 gns. and Portrait of Mrs. T. Frognall Dibdin by J. Hoppner, R.A., 1,000 gns. Colonel the Hon. Thomas G. Morgan, Grenville, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., sent pictures which formed part of the Collection of the 2nd Marquess of Breadalbane from whom they have descended to the present owner and were at Taymouth Castle, Perthshire. These included The Madonna and Child with an Angel by Francesco Francia, on panel, 22½ in. by 17½ in., 6,000 gns., B. E. Murillo's Ecce Homo, Our Saviour in red robe, wearing the Crown of Thorns, on panel, arched top. This made 1,400 gns. and had at one time been in the chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar in the Cathedral of Seville. A Portrait of the Marquis of Vieuxville, who was killed at the Battle of Auburn Chase, brought 800 gns. By Sir A. Vandyck, this measured 84 in. by 48 in. and was from the Collection at Stowe House. Two other fine Vandyck pictures were sent by the Marquess of Linlithgow, M.C., Ecce Homo, Our Saviour with black and white cloak round his loins and wearing the Crown of Thorns, sold for 8,000 gns. It was painted about 1622-27, measured 40 in. by 31 in., and had been exhibited at the Exhibition of Flemish Art, Royal Academy, 1953, no. 200. The other was a portrait of the Infanta Isabella-Clara-Eugenia, Archduchess of Austria and Regent of the Netherlands, in the habit of a tertiary of the Franciscan Order, 55 in. by 43½ in., this portrait made 1,000 gns. It had also been exhibited at the Exhibition of Flemish Art, Royal Academy, 1953, no. 446. The Executors of the late Sir Felix Cassel, Bt. sent a picture by Lucas Cranach the Elder which made 2,600 gns. This was of a Hunt in Honour of Charles the Fifth with the Elector John of Saxony and his Court at Torgau, signed with monogram and date 1545, 47 in. by 70 in. (from the Collections of the Earl of Ashburnham and of the Marquis of Breadalbane 1886). In the same property, a work by Willem van de Velde of the Dutch Fleet off the Entrance to the River near Brielle, 17 in. by 27 in., made 3,800 gns. See Dr. C. Hofstede de Groot's *Catalogue of Dutch Painters*, 1923, vol. VII, no. 152. Two flower paintings fetched 1,500 gns. and 1,200 gns. The first was by A. Bosschaert, on panel, 36 in. by 26 in., with flowers in a vase, and the second by B. van der Ast, also a vase of flowers, signed on panel, 20½ in. by 16½ in.

Included in the pictures sold at Phillips, Son and Neale were two by Hondcoetter, one with chickens and other birds in a landscape sold for £68, 39 in. by 46 in. and the other "Game, Birds and Reptiles at a rockwork pool with botanical specimens", £50, 28 in. by 63 in.

Knight, Frank and Rutley included a gouache drawing by J. B. C. Corot, "Heath with female figures," 7½ in. by 5½ in., signed, which sold for £42, and had MS. inscription on the reverse. In the same sale was "Canal Landscape with Figures and Farm Buildings," 14 in. by 21 in., by J. van Goyen, £50.

**JEWELLERY.** At Sotheby's there was a highly important sale of Jewels, including a magnificent diadem in emeralds and diamonds, one of the Crown Jewels of France which now sold for £5,500. It was composed of nine emerald and diamond clusters graduating in size to a large centre, 2½ in. high. This diadem was completed by Messrs. Frederic Bapst Bros., jewellers to the French Crown, on July 25th, 1820 and was worn successively by the royal Princesses and Empress Eugenie. It was bought on behalf of Count Mano Andrassy great-grandfather of the present owner, at the State sale of French Crown Jewels, May 14th, 1887, no. 27. Another magnificent lot Sotheby's included in this sale was a parure of emeralds and diamonds which also has great historical interest. It comprised a Stomacher with seven cabochon emerald drops, pendant from the three diamond festoons and a much larger emerald as centre drop. The pair of Earrings had very large cabochon drop emeralds of exceptional colour, each pendant from a large Indian diamond of oval shape. This superb parure, which was sent in by Prince F. J. Windisch-Graetz, made £12,800. The emeralds were bought by the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, brother of Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, and were presented to his wife, the Empress Charlotte, sister of King Leopold II of Belgium. On her death, the jewel was inherited by the Princess Stephanie of Belgium, widow of Emperor Franz Josef I's only son, who was the grandmother of Prince F. J. Windisch-Graetz. £2,500 was paid for a remarkable pair of Zarfs, heavily encrusted in diamonds in gold settings on a background of green enamel. An XVIIIth-century Panagia of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, which was presented by Catharine II, brought £500. The gold cross was mounted with an emerald and four rubies in the centre and the groundwork decorated with miniature painted icons, the reverse similarly decorated, the swivel pendant with emerald, ruby and rose diamonds, 6½ in. long by 3½ in. wide.

## SALE ROOM NOTES AND PRICES

This was in the private collection of Peter Carl Faberge and illustrated by Cyril G. E. Blunt on p. 147 of *Russian Art*.

Prices of jewellery obtained by Messrs. John D. Wood at a house sale near Christchurch are given below.

**FURNITURE.** Among the French furniture sold by Christie's was a bureau à cylindre sent by Lady Carew-Pole. This was of small size, only 39 in. wide, and probably by J. H. Reisener. In mahogany with ormolu mounts and plaques and Carrara marble slab top, the piece fetched 620 gns. An English blue-lacquered bureau cabinet sold for 400 gns. This early XVIIIth-century example was sent in by Colonel Rex Benson, D.S.O., M.C., and had arched mirror panels to the doors in the upper part and moulded double arched cornice, decorated in gold and colours with equestrian warriors, other figures, animals, birds and insects in landscapes on the blue ground, the interior partly lacquered red, 46 in. wide. A much earlier example of furniture was also sent in by the same owner and fetched 140 gns. This was a French Renaissance cabinet, in walnut, in the manner of Jean Goujon, carved in low relief with figures of Venus, Juno, Paris and Diana. From the collection of the late Sir George Lindsay Holford, K.C.V.O., 1927, and illustrated in *The Holford Collection*, Dorchester House, Vol. II, pl. 189. In another property was a Chippendale mahogany tripod table of fine quality which made 310 gns. This piece was 26 in. wide, the border to the octagonal tip-up top carved with scrolling vines. 170 gns. and 190 gns. were paid for two screens. The first was an XVIIIth-century French giltwood screen of four leaves, the moulded borders carved with overlapping leaves and the canvas panels painted with chinoiserie, the reverse with floral red and gold damask; each leaf measured 6 ft. 2 in. high by 24½ in. wide. The other screen was a Chinese example from the K'ang Hsi period. Of large size with twelve leaves each measuring 9 ft. 2 in. high by 19 in. wide, and incised decoration of figures in landscapes on a black lacquer ground.

At Rogers, Chapman and Thomas, £61 and £56 were paid for two Regency sofa tables. The first was of rosewood inlaid with brass on a bow and quadruple support, 3 ft., and the other of zebra wood banded with rosewood, on end supports with brass paw terminals, 2 ft. 10 in. wide.

The Motcomb Galleries sold a mahogany dining table with "D"-ends and one insertion, 6 ft. 10 in. by 3 ft. 3 in., for £44, and another, very similar, for £30, which measured 6 ft. 11 in. by 3 ft. 2 in. Both had turned pillar supports. They also sold an XVIIIth-century walnut bureau with two short and two long drawers for £35, 3 ft. 1 in. wide.

At sales in their Galleries in Lewes, Rowland Gorringer and Co.

included an old English breakfront bookcase and a Chippendale mahogany bureau bookcase which sold for £63 and £82 respectively.

### HOUSE SALES.

**RETTFORD.** Messrs. Henry Spencer and Sons sold a large portion of the contents of Wiseton Hall, Nr. Retford, Notts., by order of Major-General R. E. Laycock, C.B., D.S.O. The silver included a set of four gadrooned oval Sauce Tureens and Covers by Paul Storr the bodies repousse with cupids and birds, London Hall Mark 1799, 81 oz., £140. £140 was also paid for a Pair of Table Candelabra with five candlebranches and fluted tapering shafts, 27 in. high, London Hall Mark for 1875, 300 oz. nett. approx. In this section, too, was a George III oval Tea Tray, 29 in. by 20 in. which sold for £114. This had the London Hall Mark for 1781 and weighed approx. 182 oz. Among the furniture sold was a set of two carving and six single Chippendale design mahogany Dining Chairs, with carved serpentine top rails and pierced and interlaced splats, £200. An Adam mahogany Knee-hole Writing Desk, 5 ft. 3 in. wide, sold for £165. £172 was paid for a set of Louis XVI design furniture with ormolu mounts and comprising Wardrobe, knee-hole Dressing Table, Writing Table, Pedestal Table with marble top and Bedstead with box mattress and overmattress.

**ABERGAVENNY.** Messrs. J. Straker, Chadwick and Sons, Abergavenny, held a sale of the remaining contents of The Chain, Abergavenny, and sold a George III foxmask Drinking Cup 4½ oz. for £47 10s., a Dutch floral marqueterie Bureau Bookcase for £110 and a late XVIIIth-century mahogany Corner Cupboard for £15 15s.

**CHRISTCHURCH.** A sale was held at Wolhayes, Highcliffe, near Christchurch, Hampshire, by Messrs. John D. Wood and Co. of London. This was well attended and in the jewellery section good prices were obtained. These included £1,100 for a diamond set head ornament, £850 for a diamond and sapphire pendant and £320 for a diamond brooch with a centre line of seven sapphires. Two rings made £280 and £215. The first, a diamond and sapphire three-stone ring, and the second a ruby half-hoop five-stone ring. A diamond-set openwork oval cluster Pendant brought £370 and a diamond-set Bangel, £230.

**HENLEY ON THAMES.** A sale was held by Phillips, Son and Neale by direction of Major R. A. Downing Fullerton at Hambledon Place, Henley-on-Thames. Among the lots included was an antique lead cistern embossed with flowers, £50, and a pair of green onyx and marble pedestals with chased ormolu and *cloisonné* mounts, £40. The furniture included an Italian lacquered brass circular Table, 24 in. diam., £48, and a kingwood Bureau Plat of Louis XV design, ormolu mounts, 45 in., £42.

# THE LIBRARY SHELF

## SOME SPECIALISED COLLECTIONS

MOST collectors have one or two personal specialities—books on brewing or butterflies, Africa or aeronautics; books with fore-edge paintings or in signed bindings, missals or manuscripts, books with coloured plates or early children's books. The advantage of this, apart from its absorbing interest, is that the collector soon becomes a specialist with a greater knowledge of values in his particular field than the general bookseller. Moreover, as his accumulation grows, new discoveries are more and more exciting as they become rarer. It is essential, I think, not to choose a subject so wide that it is discouraging and demands a library too large for a private house, but on the other hand, a subject can be so specialised and limited that a year's search will exhaust it.

One of the most ornate of such collections, because the title of the book must be secondary in importance to the production, is that of books printed by the private presses. It is a little hard to understand why some of these are neglected by the bibliophil; certainly it is not because he is indifferent to the work of private presses as a whole. Books from the Golden Cockerel Press, for instance, have been appearing in catalogues for many years, and collectors who have been buying them as they appeared are rewarded now by the steady upward trend of their values. There is a *Catalogue Raisonné of Books Printed and Published at the Doves Press* (1908) which is in itself a collector's item. The Caradoc Press, which issued in 12mo in 1914 such an item as *The King's Quair: A poem Attributed to James I of Scotland*, ornamented by H. G. Webb, the Daniel Press of

Oxford of an earlier period, the Nonesuch Press which published on a far larger scale, but maintained its high standards of production—all these made books which are worth seeking now on account of their printing, quite apart from their contents. Most stylised, perhaps, are the productions of William Morris's Kelmscott Press, or those of the Fanfrolico Press. Then there was the Riccardi Press, *The Song of Songs which is Solomon's*, with coloured plates by Russell Flint (1913), and the Florence Press which published an edition of Blake's poems edited by John Sampson in 1921. Perhaps the best-designed of private press books came from the Essex House Press though the XVIIIth-century reproductions done by the Cayme Press in the 1920's were fine.

There were others, all flourishing at about the same time, that is to say, chiefly between 1890 and 1920. There was the Walpole Press which issued a translation of De Musset's *The Confessions of a Child of the Century* in 1901, and the De La More Press.

Of all these the Golden Cockerel Press and Nonesuch Press survive to-day, but there are several new and interesting foundations like the Hand and Flower Press which may do no less interesting work.

A man must be very rich to-day to make a collection of fine bindings of the XVIIIth century and earlier, particularly if he wants bindings which have been attributed to one of the great English binders like Samuel Mearne or Roger Payne (1739-1797). But there are bindings which are later and certainly much less rare which could be collected before



the war at a few shillings each and even now are often marked at a not wholly exorbitant price, little books in the quite matchless binding of Regency times with plates, usually, by one of the great illustrators who flourished then. I have beside me, for instance, a 12mo *Junius* bound for the Marquis of Lothian of that time, and so, not surprisingly, incorporating a thistle in its minutely detailed tooling. Or a tiny apple-green book which contains the poetical works of a certain John Cunningham who wrote a successful farce called *Love in a Mist*, and anticipated heroes of motor-racing with the verse:

'Tis strange, the many-marshal'd stars,  
That ride you sacred round,  
Should keep among their rapid cars,  
A silence so profound!

This is from the Chiswick Press of that great printer, Charles Whittingham, so is a minute Bacon's Essays with a Stothard title-page engraved by (John) Romney. This is bound in beige morocco, and uniform with it, except in details of binding, is that best-seller of the time, *Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia*. They were issued, I find now, in "Whittingham's Cabinet Library," of which a score of titles are listed at the end of Elizabeth, "in a neat pocket size with embellishments by Corbould, Westall, Stothard, etc." Any part of the library, the publisher generously says, "May be had separate"; to-day it could only be "had separate," but what a pleasant, comparatively inexpensive and rewarding piece of collecting it would be to get together the whole of "Whittingham's Cabinet Library" once more.

Whittingham also printed for the publisher John Sharpe a number of slightly larger books with Westall plates which are nearly always found in fine bindings. I see prices like one shilling still written in these by the booksellers who sold them to me before the war: Falconer's *Shipwreck*, Young's *Night Thoughts*, and so on—best-sellers in their day. Alike in size and binding, though inevitably with shamrock leaves

and harps in evidence, is Moore's *Irish Melodies*, and in plum-coloured morocco another forgotten but once hugely popular book, Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*.

Collections of books on various subjects have always conformed rather to precedent and it would be interesting to hear of some new ones. Aeronautics, Africa, America, Art, Australia—the familiar headings are to be seen in every general bookseller's catalogue. My own interest is awakened by the word *Cookery*, though all too often it is followed by one of the standard collector's items or by a manuscript cookery book of the XVIIIth century which sounds exciting, but turns out to be a housewife's extracts from books published at the time. But there are very early cookery books which are so nearly unique that every known copy can be accounted for, like *This is the Boke of Cokery. Emprynted without Temple Barre* by Richarde Pynson in the Yere of our Lorde MD. Half a dozen other cookery books are known to have been printed in the XVIth century, but the first example of them which a modern collector is likely to find in any edition is *A Booke of Cookerie* which was first issued as a black letter 12mo in 1620, but several times reprinted. The charm of such a subject as this is that books on it which a collector will want to possess are still being issued. This season, for instance, has appeared *Venus in the Kitchen or Love's Cookery Book*, by Pilaff Bey, edited by Norman Douglas, with an Introduction by Graham Greene, a delightful manual and, unlike so many cookery books, beautifully written.

Manuscripts is another tempting division of booksellers' catalogues and some curious things have exchanged hands after being offered thus. If miscellaneous and apparently not very important manuscripts had been consistently purchased as they appeared by some specialist collector in the XIXth century they would now make a unique library. Happy is the man who finds a not-too-much exploited subject and forms a fine collection of books on it.

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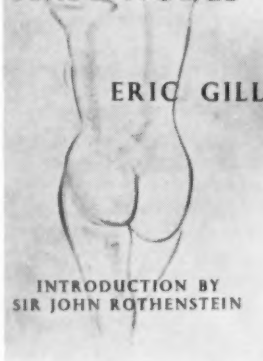
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HANFSTAENGL PRINTS. At Pallas Gallery, Albemarle Street, London. Catalogue 1s. 6d.



The Munich firm of Hanfstaengl has once again made available in this country their reproductions of the works of Old Masters and modern artists.

The prints are modestly priced—from 2 to 3½ guineas. There is a wide choice of Old Masters, the French Impressionists—of which the examples are many—a good selection of the German Romantic School and many charming modern decorative pictures. Particularly attractive are the flowerpieces of Hans Prentzel and Carl Berndt.

The collotype printing is of very high quality, of which the black-and-white catalogue can give little idea. The thirteen-colour process used gives outstanding colour reproduction and, one is almost tempted to say, texture, so good is the fidelity.

ASPECTS OF MINIATURE PAINTING: Its Origins and Development. By TORBEN HOLCK COLDING. Nelson £6 6s.

Reviewed by Horace Shipp.

The one thing wrong with this book is the modesty of its title. This implies an incomplete treatment, but really can only betoken the scholarly author's recognition of the enormous range of his subject. In fact no single book covers this theme of the history of the miniature more thoroughly from its earliest beginnings to its ultimate decline in the XIXth century. The trouble hitherto has been that, because of the supremacy of the English miniature in Tudor and early Stuart times, the subject has been seen rather from that peak; and although Graham Reynolds in his recent book *English Portrait Miniatures* and Basil Long in his earlier work *British Miniatures* naturally explore further than their titles suggest, Torben Holck Colding takes a Continental view which sees the golden age of the English miniature in its rightful perspective.

The other important point about this Danish scholar's approach is his most useful division of types into three categories: book miniatures, ornamental miniatures, and cabinet miniatures. He is particularly fruitful in his insistence on the part played in the evolution of the miniature by the ornamental picture—containing jewels and locket of mediæval times. The art of the goldsmith is made to stand beside that of the book illuminator

as the foundation stone of his edifice of miniaturist painting. He rightly insists upon the significance of Hilliard's belief that the colours of a miniature were related to those of precious stones—an indication of the goldsmith's viewpoint. In Hilliard's time, and in his early practice, the miniature was still a jewel, an article of adornment only one remove from the reliquary of pre-Reformation days. Once the portrait had taken the place of the sacred talisman, and the portrait box that of the reliquary, the way of change was open, and the influence of the oil painting of the XVIIth century operated. The day dawned of the cabinet miniature as a popular art, instead of, as Hilliard called it, "a thing apart from all other painting." There is a tendency, especially in the English books, to end the story there, since the influence of Van Dyck inaugurated our own great period of full-size portraiture beneath which the art of the miniature failed. Again Mr. Colding's volume achieves the right balance by exploring that decline, the XVIIIth century renaissance and the part played by Rosalba Carriera, and the real anti-climax in the pictorial XIXth century. This volume forms an invaluable contribution to the literature of its fascinating subject.

PENCIL DRAWING FOR THE ARCHITECT. By CHARLES I. HOBBS. Tiranti. 7s. 6d.

Reviewed by A. Knott

In his introductory remarks Mr. Hobbs states clearly his reasons for writing this book and gives good advice to young architects in language that can be easily understood.

The carefully selected illustrations show how well the pencil can convey the texture and quality of the traditional building materials. Architects nowadays seem to rely less on pencil drawings for presenting their designs to clients than was previously the case and the reason may be that contemporary forms and surfaces can best be illustrated by other means.

Apart from the author's own careful and sympathetic drawings there are a number of others by well-known masters of the medium, and among these the beautiful "Street Scene," Muirhead Bone, and "Fluy," Samuel Prout, are worth special study.

It would have been interesting if the actual size of the original could have been included in the notes which accompany each drawing. A useful little book.

THE LANGUAGE OF PICTURES. By DAVID BELL. Batsford. 25s.

Reviewed by Jon Wynne-Tyson

In writing a guide for people who are familiar with the subtler, more cultivated pleasures of life in literature and music, but for whom the language in which a painter speaks in his painting is an unknown tongue, Mr. Bell is treading on ground which even in these over-analysed, super-tabulated scientific days might be regarded as slightly out of bounds. There is no doubt of his good intentions in trying to enrich his reader's experience, when confronted by a picture, by explaining what the painter is trying to say and how he says it, but it is possibly begging the

question to assume that the older masters—and it is largely the classic paintings which Mr. Bell discusses—really stand in need of an interpreter. If a Botticelli or a Sandby water-colour cannot speak for themselves, nor, we must assume, can a Beethoven symphony or the novels of Dickens.

Fortunately, however, Mr. Bell is not over-concerned with such dreary help-mates of his trade as inner significances, compulsions, and psychological undertones. He has, rather, a good deal to say concerning technical means and limitations and the backgrounds against which some of the old masters painted, and he permits himself some well-informed speculation on topics and abstractions seldom less than relevant to his subject.

The book is rounded off by concise notes on the artists mentioned in the text, and by an index.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE. By KENNETH GARLICK. Routledge. 52s. 6d.

Reviewed by Mary Seaton

That Mr. Kenneth Garlick feels considerable interest in the work of Sir Thomas Lawrence is made clear by the valuable catalogue and index he has compiled to nine hundred of the artist's oil paintings. Yet for all that, he keeps his head about him. He knows exactly where he is when it comes to an assessment of the powers of this almost national figure, who became accepted as the first portrait painter of Europe at the time of the Prince Regent.

Mr. Garlick is cautious when he uses such terms as "highly skilful," but is fair in realising that so great was the vogue for Lawrence's portraits that immediacy rather than composing had to become the artist's chief concern. His biographical essay on Lawrence is well balanced, and we hand over our trust to the writer as a critic. He is the Assistant Curator and Lecturer in the History of Art at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at Birmingham University, and this is his first book. We look forward to more of his work.

There are 119 plates in monochrome in the present volume, forming a chronological survey of Lawrence's style which, though often over-theatrical, had great beauty of line and subtlety of colour. They comprise the largest collection of reproductions of Sir Thomas Lawrence yet brought together.

ROYAL VISIT. Angus & Robertson. 15s.

For those who wish to add a memento of the Queen's recent tour to their souvenirs of Coronation year, and the number will be legion, it is surely both fitting and pleasurable that Australia should print and publish an English edition of their official volume on the Royal Visit to Australia.

This book, with its many photographs both in colour and black-and-white, not only portrays the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh covering every engagement over the many miles of a vast continent, but gives some idea of the charm and beauty of another realm that, as proudly as did England in 1953, proclaims its Queen.

O. R.

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